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THE HISTORY OF RELIGION:

PARTICULARLY OF THE
Principal Denominations of CHRISTIANS,

VIZ.

Of the Church of Rome,	Of the Independents,
_____ England,	_____ Baptists in general,
_____ Scotland,	_____ Quakers,
_____ Nonjurors,	_____ Antinomians,
_____ Lutherans,	_____ Moravians,
_____ Presbyterians,	_____ Methodists in general.

CONTAINING

A succinct and genuine Account of their original and present CONSTITUTION, DISCIPLINE, DOCTRINES, WORSHIP, and CEREMONIES: With a general Account of the various Sectaries of less Note, since the first Establishment of Christianity.

Including a general History of the REFORMATION, and so much of Civil and Ecclesiastical History as is connected with, or necessary to explain and illustrate the Work.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

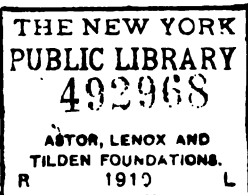
A DICTIONARY of the principal Religious ORDERS, OFFICES, DAYS, RITES, CUSTOMS, HABITS, and CHARACTERS; the most important TRANSACTIONS of Ecclesiastical COUNCILS, SYNODS, &c. explaining all such ambiguous Words and Phrases as have a proper Connexion with the Subjects of this History.

By an IMPARTIAL HAND.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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MDCCLXIV.





T H E

P R E F A C E.



O improve the Understanding in any Branch of useful Knowledge, has ever been esteemed a laudable Pursuit; and every Attempt to facilitate the Propagation of Knowledge, in Proportion to the Nature and Importance of the Subject, and the Propriety of the Method, will, it is presumed, meet with Approbation and Encouragement.

To obtain a Skill in the Sciences is, indeed, the Business and Profession only of a few Men of distinguished Abilities; but there are many who have Capacity and Leisure to improve and enrich their Minds in various Branches of Knowledge; even the lower Order of Men have particular Callings and Concerns in Life, in which it behoves them to employ their Reason in the Use of proper Helps for their Improvement.

The common Duties and Benefits of Society, which interest every Man living, as he is a social Creature; even our particular and necessary Relations to a Family, a Neighbourhood, or Government, oblige all Persons to exercise their reasoning Powers in a Variety of Cases, before they can come

to a prudent discreet Determination, and avoid those Errors which would naturally be attended with unhappy Consequences.

But every Man has a more important Concern in the Affairs of a Life to come; and therefore it is a Matter of the highest Moment for every one to understand, reason, and to determine justly about the Things of Religion: 'Tis in vain for Persons in general to say, We have no Leisure or Time; when the daily Intervals and Vacancies from necessary Labour, together with the One Day in Seven, in the Christian World, allow a sufficient Time for such Pursuits: And if Men would but apply themselves hereto, with half as much Zeal and Diligence as they do to the Trifles and Amusements of this Life, it would turn to infinitely better Account.

But, besides the right Knowledge of those Principles and Duties which are of the greatest Concernment, there are some Branches of Study, which have a most apparent Tendency to entertain as well as to improve; and, of this Kind, some Subjects of History will claim the Preference; and, perhaps, there is no Part of History better received than the Account of great Changes and Revolutions in States and Governments.

Of all Changes, those in Religion which have been sudden and signal, are enquired into with the most eager Curiosity; and, where the Salvation of Souls has been chiefly aimed at, and the Credit, Honour and Interest of Churches promoted and established, the more Pious and Judicious will find their Satisfaction much more than compensate the seeming Trouble of their Search into the Reality and Circumstances thereof.

The

P R E F A C E.

v

The Alteration that has been made in the established Religion of this Nation for little more than the two last Centuries, has produced such Effects every where, that it is no Wonder if all Persons desire to see a clear Account of the several Steps by which it advanced; of the Councils that directed it, and the Motives, both religious and political, that inclined Men of all Conditions to concur in it.

To lay before the Public a particular and impartial Account of the Constitution and Doctrine of the several Denominations of Christians, is the principal Intent of this Undertaking; and, upon the most mature Enquiry I have been able to make, I find the Doctrines and Tenets of all Denominations to have varied greatly from their original Constitution, and distinguishing Character.

This Observation will appear to be true, even with respect to the *Roman Catholic* Church, which has been most of all solicitous to preserve the *Catholic* Faith, as they call it, pure and uncorrupt. The wiser Part disclaim some of their most absurd Doctrines, and discard and despise many of their ridiculous Ceremonies: Some Reformation has been made in these Respects by Churches of that Persuasion in different Nations of *Europe*; and it is more than probable that many of the most serious and judicious Papists would be glad to see a greater Reformation even in the Fundamentals of their Religion.

Picart, under the Article of adoring the Cross, says, "This Ceremony gives great Scandal to *Hereticks*, who look upon this solemn Adoration on Good Friday as manifest Idolatry—would it not be better to decline some Ceremonies which *Catholics* are reduced to Shifts, Disguises, and Evasions

to

to defend, and which are looked on as Folly to the Libertine, and a Scandal to the Protestant?"*

In the Church of *England* it is well known great Alterations have taken place since the Reformation: At that Time the generality of the *English* Divines, especially the Majority of the Committee for Compiling the Articles of this Church, were strict or rigid Calvinists, who, in Spite of all the Opposition they met with, modelled several of the Articles in Favour of Calvinism, which now the greatest Part of the *English* Divines would fain explain contrary to their literal Sense and Meaning; represent them as, at best, ambiguous and capable of a Sense more consistent with the general Tenour of the Scriptures, and the Reason and common Sense of Mankind.—In like Manner *Athanasius's* Creed was then, by Authority, inserted in the Book of Common Prayer, and, with all the incomprehensible Mysteries and exceptionable Clauses, cordially received by some, and imposed on others, as the true *Catholic* Faith; whereas now, to say no more to explode it, the Church in general "would be glad to be well rid of it." If the Question were asked, What are the genuine Sentiments of the Church of *England*? it would be a very vague, indeterminate and false Answer, to say they are contained in the XXXIX Articles; when it is well known that the Majority of our most eminent Prelates and Divines of the established Church, have embraced and professed, and in their public Preaching and Writings endeavour to inculcate, Principles more consistent with the Nature of genuine Christianity.

The same Observation is equally true, with respect to many other Denominations, namely the
Kirk

* *Picart's Edition of the Religious Ceremonies*, Vol. II. P. 25.

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Kirk or Church of Scotland, the *English Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, &c.* as would be no difficult Matter to particularize in many Instances, were it not unnecessary, as will evidently appear in the Course of this Work.

This may be one Reason why all the Histories extant, of the several Sectaries of Christians, differ so widely from each other, and are so very imperfect and erroneous: I wish this was the only Reason, and that there did not appear some evident Marks of a malevolent Design to misrepresent Sectaries, in order to expose them to Censure and Contempt. This I hint with particular Regard to *Ross's View of all Religions*, being, of all others, the most scurrilous and false; and to that voluminous Edition of the Religious Ceremonies of all Nations, in which the Author appears greatly mistaken in the Constitution and Principles of several Societies of *English Protestant Dissenters*; and also to *Bossuet's History of the Variation of Protestant Churches in the Low Countries*.

But this Crime of Misrepresentation is not applicable only to a few Histories of our own or foreign Nations, and those for the most part obsolete: Certain modern Writers seem to have taken a secret Pleasure in blackening the Characters of some Societies of Christians, and exposing and censuring such Doctrines or Rites as they learned not in their Infancy to believe or practise; forgetting, though ashamed to deny, the Right of private Judgment, and Liberty of Conscience; and too often ignorant of the genuine Principles of those Societies they censure, and of the Arguments upon which they are founded. Indeed I have been often surprized to find Persons
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of Credit, and otherwise of good Understanding, so extremely ignorant, not only with respect to the genuine Sentiments of other Denominations of Christians; but in a very high Degree, of the distinguishing Tenets or Principles of that Religion they themselves profess; and consequently of the Arguments on which they rest. This was one Motive to the Prosecution of the present Work; and another was to suppress Bigotry, Prejudice, and Censoriousness, too apt to take Possession of narrow Minds; and, in their Place, to inculcate and improve that mutual Love and Charity, even for Persons of differing Opinions, which is so agreeable to the Dignity and Honour of Men and of Christians.

I write for no Party; my Aim is to recommend a free and impartial Enquiry into the genuine Principles of Christianity, which is the just Foundation of Truth and Virtue, Liberty and Charity.

That generally-received Maxim, *Rome was not built in a Day*, is as undoubtedly true with respect to the Constitution, Doctrine and Ceremonies of the *Romish* Church, as of its external Form and stately Edifices; for this Reason I have judged a brief Account of the principal Revolutions and Variations in the Government, Worship, &c. of that Church for seventeen Centuries, a proper Preliminary to the History of its present State.

The Account I have given of the Principles, &c. of the *Romish* Church, I have first expressed in the Words of Pope *Pius's* Creed, which was established by the Council of *Trent*, and has been ever since

esteemed

esteemed by the Votaries of that Church, of the greatest Authority. I have likewise endeavoured to explain or ascertain their true Sense, from Authors of their own, well approved of by that Church, and whose Books have been licensed by public Authority; disclaiming and carefully avoiding, as much as possible, the fallacious Glosses, and artful Disguises of designing Priests on the one Hand, and the Misapprehensions of the Vulgar on the other. For this Purpose I have consulted the most valuable Histories of that Church, their Constitution, Doctrine and Ceremonies published at that remarkable Period, when the Controversy subsisted between many of our eminent Prelates and of their Priests and Cardinals from the Year 1682 to 1688, inclusive.

I have also made several Extracts from Dr. *Middleton's* Letters from *Rome*, wherein he has shewn, (conformable to several other Authors) that many of the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Romish* Church were of Heathen original, and destitute of superior Authority for their Practice: In these Extracts, I have not thought it necessary to Change his Language, to avoid the Reprehension of those Sentiments and Ceremonies; nor have I allowed myself to exclaim or to detail out such Invectives as are too generally used, but have no proper and natural Tendency to convince the *Papist*, or confirm the *Protestant*. — If I have given any Scope to Censure, it is in the Article of Persecution, where it was impossible, after reading so many tragical Accounts of the horrid Cruelties of the *Inquisition*, and other inhuman Executions, to be impartial and honest without expressing the utmost Abhorrence and Detestation of such Practices, and the Principles that led to them; a superficial Mention of which, will alarm every true *Protestant* who has ever considered

the Value of civil and religious Liberty and knows how to prize them. — With Respect to other Sentiments and Practices that are unscriptural and merely of human Invention, I am sorry to see, in the Defences of Popery, how much they are founded upon the Authority of ancient Fathers, and that they are so often shewn to be consonant with some former Practices of our established Church; with certain of the Canons, Articles, and Liturgy; which may fully convince us, that most of the Exceptionable Parts of our Articles and Liturgy arose from the undue Veneration which the Compilers of them paid to the Fathers St. *Augustine*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Ambrose*, &c. and likewise sufficiently demonstrate to the impartial Reader, that *Antiquity is a wretched Guide to a Searcher after Truth; and that human Formularies of Faith are a chief Obstacle to real Knowledge.*

As to the political Views, base Artifices, and Exactions of the *Romish* Priests, too much of it will appear in the Course of this History: An impartial Mention of them is in Fact to explode them: Particularly in the History of the State of Religion in *Great Britain*, from the first planting of Christianity, at the latter End of the VIth and Beginning of the VIIth Century, to the Middle of the XIVth Century, when *Wickliffe* made some Efforts towards a Reformation. The Reader will find many remarkable Occurrences, in Respect to the Incroachments of the Church of *Rome* on the Prerogatives of the *British* Kings, and the common Rights of their Subjects, as well as by the gross Corruptions of the original Purity and Simplicity of Christianity, as must ever be deemed peculiar Incentives to the *English* Nation, to throw off that
Yoke

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Yoke if possible; and pursue a Reformation in earnest—and at the same Time, he will observe such Difficulties attending it, as must give us any high Opinion of our principal Reformers, and lead us to value our Liberties both civil and religious.

In the History of the Reformation abroad and at home; and of the State of Religion, more especially in the established Church, and from that remarkable Period to the Revolution, I must own I have much exceeded my intended Limits; but when I considered, the necessary Connection between the Reformation in the *Low Countries*, *France*, and in *England*, the many interesting Circumstances that occurred, in which our principal Reformers were exhibited to View (which indeed deserve to be ever preserved, and handed down to latest Posterity) and which I doubt not will be perused by many, with Pleasure and Improvement, I was not willing to omit them.

Having mentioned *Wickliffe* as the *Morning Star* of the Reformation, I have likewise given a general History of the Period in which he lived, to the Reign of King *Henry* the VIIIth, the reputed Time when Protestantism took its Rise: In this Interval I have found many Circumstances of an interesting Nature relative to the necessity of a Reformation, the Difficulties attending it, and likewise of incidental Occurrences contributing thereto, which, at Length, made it rise superior to Opposition. How far the Reformation was intended or effected by King *Henry* VIII, is a Point in which even critical Historians are much divided: I have therefore sought the Materials of this difficult Part of my History, from ancient MSS, as well as modern Tracts; and I have been somewhat more diffuse in

this Part, as I have selected from two MSS, his Profession of Faith wrote in 1536, and *Memoirs of his Character*, compiled much about the same Time.

My next Province is to give a History of the State of Religion in the successive Reigns, down to the present Time, in which I have been careful to introduce whatever has been signal and interesting, either in the ecclesiastical History of the established Church, or of such remarkable Transactions and Revolutions, in the civil History of this Nation, as are connected with it for more than two Hundred Years, and as the prevailing Opinions and Parties, gave Rise at different Times, to a Variety of Transactions in Council, in Parliament, and ecclesiastic Convocations, some of a remarkable interesting Nature, I thought them the proper Subjects of such an History : But as many of them are peculiar to different Denominations, that Part of them I have inserted in the respective History of those Sects, and what properly relate to the ecclesiastical Polity and Government of the Church of *England*, comes under that Head.

In the Prosecution of this Part, I have attempted some Account of the Princes, and most eminent Prelates and Divines, whose Lives and Writings have done Honour to the Christian Protestant Church, and also of such as have attempted to sap the Foundation of Truth, Liberty and Virtue.

In treating of the Articles of the Church of *England*, I have first given them in the established Form, contained in the Book of Common Prayer ; I have then endeavoured to give their true Sense, from sundry of the most approved Expositions of those Articles, by some distinguished Prelates of
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our Church, and other Divines of Note, and generally by Extracts in their own Words; save where I have thought it might be more properly abridged, and in that Case I have given an Abstract, with due Regard to the Sense and Meaning of the Author, and of the Articles in their original Form, in a Sense in which the more judicious Divines would recommend them to be understood.—Mr. *Welchman*, in his Exposition of these Articles, pays a particular Regard to the Sense of the ancient Fathers, St. *Austin*, St. *Chrysostom*, St. *Ignatius*, *Irenæus*, &c. and it appears that the Language and Sentiment contained in them, are in great Measure borrowed from the Writings of those Lights of the primitive Church, which, by the Way, shews the great Veneration and Esteem our first Compilers had for Antiquity; and very often to the Neglect of more certain, essential and important Rules and Principles of Judging, concerning the Truths of the sacred Scriptures: But this is only a Hint; for I must declare that I have made it a general Rule, throughout the whole of this Work, to relate Facts and describe Things as I found them, without attempting to animadvert thereon.

— In representing the Constitution and Doctrines of other Denominations of Christians, I have made it my constant Rule to shew that I understood the Subject, and was under no undue Bias. Impartiality I esteemed essentially recommendatory of this Work, and the best Apology I could make for whatever involuntary Errors and Imperfections might attend the Publication.

Throughout the Whole I have aimed at Conciseness, as far as I judged would comport with the Plan I had in View, its Entertainment and Usefulness;
for

for I have characterized each Sect and explained their Doctrines, more especially their peculiar Tenets, where I could, in their own Words.—— This Method will afford not a barely superficial and partial Account of what may be the particular Sentiments of here and there a private Person and obscure Society; but of the genuine Principles of that Body or Community, which is necessary to forming a just Idea of them; and whenever it has been necessary, I have had proper Information from Correspondence, or given a personal Attendance at their Assemblies and taken Minutes, for greater certainty and Satisfaction.

Amongst a Variety of Readers I cannot expect the Approbation of all. Some there are so extremely indifferent, with respect to the principal Difference of Sentiment among Christians, as plainly implies they have never made Religion their Study, or that their own Profession is not the Effect of their Enquiry; but that they are governed in their Choice, by the Dictates of their Tutors, or the Sanction of Authority; and to such, Popery would, probably, have been as agreeable as Protestantism, or Mahomedanism as Christianity, if it had been their Lot to have been born in the Countries where these are established. I shall leave them to enjoy their supine Indifference; but not without sincerely congratulating my Countrymen, on our distinguishing Privilege, that we live in a Nation and at a Time, when Religion has in great Measure gained the Ascendant over Superstition; Truth in general prevailed against Darkness and Error, and Liberty, civil and religious, triumphed over Tyranny and Persecution for Conscience sake: And for these I hope

hope we shall always find Patrons and Advocates, amongst the more Learned and Judicious.

By some it has been suggested that this Work will be too dull and serious, and favour too much of the controverted Points of Religion ; to such I beg leave to observe, I have not often attempted to animadvert or expatiate on particular Opinions or Practices, that was not my Province ; but to give a genuine Relation of such Facts as appertain to the History, and these are, I presume, as well calculated to improve the Gentleman, and give Life and Spirit to Conversation, at proper Intervals, as any other Subjects more commonly introduced ; and where such a Variety of Facts, Circumstances and Characters are introduced, I cannot apprehend it will be unentertaining or useless.

By attempting such a Compendium of the religious Principles of particular Denominations, I imagined I might particularly adapt this Work to the perusal of many young Persons, and other well disposed Christians, who may not have Leisure or Inclination to read many distinct Treatises, and it may answer a particular good Purpose, in regard to their Information and Improvement.

As this Work was not entered upon with any party Views, or prosecuted with Prejudice and Declamation, so it has been no hasty Production ; it has been compiled at different Times, and by slow Degrees, in a Course of several Years ; now and then, indeed, it spread itself into Branches, and Leaves, like a Plant in *April*, and sometimes it lay by without Growth like a Vegetable in Winter ; but it still existed, and acquired its present Texture and Bulk according as Health, Leisure, and other Advantages favoured the Undertaking.

Nor

Nor do I apprehend the Reader will look upon this as a prolix History, when he considers not only the Extent of the Plan, but that many of the Histories necessary to be consulted are very voluminous; as *Eusebius's*, *Dupin's*, *Bingham's*, and *Collier's* ecclesiastical Histories; *Richer's* of Councils, *Father Paul's* of that of *Trent*, *Picart's* religious Ceremonies, and the Collections of Tracts for and against Popery, *Brandt's* History of the Reformation in the *Low Countries*, *Burnet's* and many others, of the Reformation in *England*, and *Laval's* of that in *France*; *Calderwood's*, *Spotswood's*, and diverse others of the Kirk of *Scotland*; *Sewel's* of *Quakerism*; *Neal's* of the *Puritans*, and *Crosby's* of the *English Baptists*: Besides a great Variety of Tracts on Points of Controversy, Dictionaries, &c. that must be referred to, and consulted, on such a Number of Subjects; *Rapin*, *Hume*, *Smollet*, and other civil Historians of our own Nation, necessary for ascertaining and illustrating all such Matters, as have an immediate Connection with the principal Design of this Work. So that, upon the Whole, I may venture to say, it has been an arduous Task, the result of much Reading and Enquiry. But notwithstanding the Assistance I have received, from so many eminent Historians, I have followed no Author any farther than I apprehended him to coincide with Truth.

After having been at all this Expence and Trouble to procure Materials and proper Helps for the Execution of my Plan, it is very probable and almost unavoidable, that many Things may have escaped my notice, which might have contributed to illustrate, confirm, or embellish the several Parts of it. I can only flatter myself that the Reader will find a sufficient Number of Quotations to ascertain the

the genuine Principles of the several Societies respectively, their Rites, Ceremonies, &c. of which I have given the following History. And I hope the judicious Reader will look on it as no Diminution of the Value of this Work, that many of the Ideas, as well as the Language, in which they are expressed, are borrowed from the Writings of the most eminent Divines of the established Church, and other Denominations, especially as, in many Instances, it was necessary for authenticating the Account I gave of the different Sectaries; and, very often, I found my Sentiments so happily expressed in them, that I presumed from my own Approbation it would be most agreeable to my Readers.

I shall not urge as any Motive to this Work, that I apprehended Popery was gaining Ground in this Nation; but as that Religion is founded in Church Policy, and propagated with Artifice and Industry by their Priests, and is suited to captivate weak Minds, it cannot be unseasonable to point out some of their Evasions, and to give a genuine Account of their Constitution, Doctrines, Ceremonies, &c. and this I judge will be sufficient, if impartially represented, and attended to, to guard Protestants against the Corruption, Superstition, and Cruelty of the *Roman Catholic* Religion.

Nor am I inclined to think a Spirit of Persecution prevails among Protestants, or of uncharitably censuring Persons for different Sentiments and Profession: I wish, indeed, this was more evident; for I find some Authors suggest, that this Principle is far from being extinguished, and that many rather want Opportunity than Inclination to persecute, and instance the high Claims of the Church, which discovered themselves in the *Banquerian Controversy*;

I am, notwithstanding, willing to hope a Love of Liberty prevails, and to promote it, I have attempted, in my Introduction, to vindicate the Right of private Judgment, and shew the Duty and the Advantages of free Enquiry, &c.

I rather think what is called *Methodism* and *Enthusiasm* prevails, to the Contempt of rational Religion; and, as I have taken Care to give a fair Account of their peculiar Tenets, I wish for nothing more than that the just Representation of their Principles may have a proper Influence on the Minds of my Readers.

In the Course of this History, I doubt not but it will appear, that the principal Differences amongst the several Denominations of Protestant Churches, consists not in any essential and fundamental Points, but in one or other of these particulars, *viz.* different Apprehensions, with respect to the original Constitution and Government of the Christian Church; different Sentiments with respect to some abstruse Points of Doctrine, in which the Essence of Religion does not, cannot consist; or else their Difference respects the positive Institutions, as to their Form and Manner, Importance or Insignificance, or of certain Rites and Ceremonies of less Importance; and that notwithstanding their Separation in Communion, and very often reproaching each other, they agree in the main essential Points of Religion, in "all such Points as are abundantly sufficient to preserve the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in the World."*

Indeed many Attempts have been made, since the Reformation, and especially since the Revolution, to reconcile Protestants; a Design which, however

* Bishop of London's second Pastoral Letter, printed in 1730.

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however laudable, can never be effected with respect to Uniformity of Sentiment: The Causes of such differing Principles, respecting Doctrine, Worship and Ceremonies, are so many and various, that we cannot hope for it, though, notwithstanding the fond Attachment of many to their own Sects, the most impartial Enquiry convince us that *no Sect of Religion is free from just Exceptions.* There is scarce any Church in *Christendom*, at this Day, that does not obtrude many Falshoods, such as must appear to any free Spirit, pure Contradictions; though delivered with the same Gravity, Authority and Importunity that they do the Holy Oracles of GOD.* And to the same Purpose a late ingenious Author observes,†

“ Every Institution or System of Religion, drawn up and adopted by Men, however it may claim a divine Original, with regard to the more important and essential Points, has always something of Weakness and Imperfection that cleave to them, and will be apt, unless carefully guarded, to degenerate into one Extreme or the other.——What Species of Devotion so pure, noble and worthy the supreme Being, as that which is most spiritual, simple and unadorned, and which partakes least of the Senses or Imagination; and yet it is found, by Experience, that Modes of Worship, founded primarily on those very Principles, do very naturally, among the Vulgar, mount up into Extravagance and Fanaticism; even many of the first Reformers have given Occasion for this Kind of Reflection, which has been a real Disparagement of their Zeal, though in the Event it proved in a very great Degree useful: It

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* *More's Mystery of Godliness*, Lib. 10. C. 2. §. 6.

† *Mr. Hume.*

partook strongly of the enthusiastic Genius, which a little more Mixture of Ceremony, Pomp and Ornament, may seem to correct the Abuse of.—— On the other Hand, a Religion attended with much of Ceremony and external Grandeur, has a very great Tendency to degenerate into Superstition.—— The Church of *England* itself, which is, perhaps, the best Medium amongst these Extremes, will be allowed, at least during the Age, or in the Discharge of the public Offices of Religion, under Archbishop *Laud*, to have been somewhat tinctured with a Superstition resembling the Popish, and to have paid a higher Regard to some positive Institutions, than the Nature of the Things strictly speaking would permit. It is the Business of an Historian to remark these Abuses of all Kinds; but it belongs also to a prudent Reader, to confine the Representations to that Age alone of which the Author treats.—— This would be of excellent Use to regulate our Ideas of several Sectaries; for it is a real Absurdity to suppose that the *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *Baptists*, and other Sectaries of the present Age, partake of all the Extravagancies which we remark in those who bore those Appellations in the last Century.”

It is very common for Historians, or other Writers, in general, to give an Account of the principal Authors who have treated on the same Subjects; and where this is done with Judgment and Impartiality, it has an apparent Usefulness: And this is, in some Measure, necessary on my Part; though I will not in the least attempt to raise the Credit of the present History, by detracting from the Merits of others.—— Bishop *Burnet* has characterized a Variety of Authors who have given us the History
of

of the Church in general, or of the Reformation in particular, which I apprehend, without Flattery, may afford us some Rule of Judging concerning them: Speaking of some foreign Histories, he says, "*Sleidan, Thuanus, and Father Paul, are Authors of Credit and Impartiality, so far, at least, as may be expected from Persons of their Profession, as Catholics.*——*Sander's History of the Reformation, instead of doing Honour to it, is replete with such Calumnies and Falshoods, as have tended to create Prejudices in the Minds of many, who have been weak enough to give Credit to it. Fox's History, is principally calculated to discover the Corruptions and Cruelties of the Romish Church; Lord Herbert's History is limited to the Reign of Henry VIII. and chiefly relates to civil Matters. Fuller, indeed, procured some few scarce Papers; but in general neither entertaining nor improving.*——*Dr. Heylin wrote in a much superior Method and Style, but was ill informed, or too much biassed by Passion and Prejudice against some Persons and Parties, who agitated Affairs at that Time; and in the historical Part produces few or no Vouchers for what he asserts. Some other of our Histories are delivered with so much Alloy and Uncertainty, as has given Occasion for the Advocates of the Church of Rome to disparage the Reformation, as begun by Lust and Passion, conducted and carried on by Ambition, and confirmed by Policy.*"*

To establish these Points, chiefly constitute the Subject of the Prefaces, the Introductions, or Appendixes, to several of those Summaries and Defences of the *Roman Catholic Faith*, which have been

* See Bishop Burnet's Preface to his *History of the Reformation*.

been so industriously dispersed, in *Great Britain*, to Poison the Minds of Protestants.

Some very remarkable Productions of this Kind have come under my Notice : The *Appendix to the Profession of Catholic Faith* contain sundry Reasons for disavowing Protestantism, or the Reformation ; though many of them so often repeated, and confuted, that one would imagine them too trifling to be propagated at this Time, when the Necessity of the Reformation, so far as it was effected, and the Expediency of carrying it much farther, has been so well defended. It consists of the following Particulars, *viz.* that *Martin Luther*, and other Reformers, were Persons of no Education ; that they were Schismatics ; the first Seeds of it sown by the Devil ; the Instruments, Men of worthless Characters, instanced in King *Henry VIII* ; that it was propagated by Lay Authority, further instanced in the Acts of Queen *Elizabeth* ; the Fruits of it a Spawn of Heresies, Diffensions, and Variations in Religion : Thence it infers, their Religion is free from all those miserable Consequences, the safest to live and to die in ; and that all who do not live in it, and abide faithfully in that Profession, are censured by the Church, and will ever justly be condemned and anathematized by her Decrees, as forsaking the infallible Guide, and adhering to that fallible, uncertain Rule of Scripture, according to their own Interpretation of it.* But though these Attempts are not to be wondered at among Persons who profess themselves Papists ; yet, that Protestants themselves should give a Handle to the Adversaries of Protestantism, to reproach their genuine Principles, and the

* Appendix to Pope Pius's Creed, printed in 1734.

the zealous Abettors of them, deserves to be mentioned to their Dishonour, and the Discredit of their Histories.

The Use M. *Bossuet* makes of his History of the Variations of Religion in the Protestant Churches in the *Low Countries*, is principally this, that the only true universal Catholic Church, under their universal infallible Head, *has been always invariably the same*, and consequently a Separation from her heretical and dangerous ; however, in the Course of this History, it will appear that this wants Proof, and there can be no Impropriety in correcting an Historian, when we find him mistaken or partial.*

Many of the Historians of our own Nation have blended civil, military and ecclesiastical Affairs together ; some have confined their History to the Church of *England*, others to the Church of *Scotland* ; some have treated only of particular Sects, others have dwelt on mere controverted Points, often in answer to their Opponents, with more of uncharitable Warmth than Argument. Many of these Historians have been of Use in this Compilation, though I was from thence led to construct this Work on what I apprehended, a more eligible Plan.

With respect to Chronology, I have aimed at the greatest Precision and Accuracy. In many remarkable Events I have followed *Blair's* Chronology, presuming it was compiled with great Care, and compared and corrected by former Chronologies ; and I have sometimes given the different Dates. Wherein that did not satisfy me, I have consulted
Dupin,

* See *Bossuet's* Variations of Religion in the Protestant Churches, 2 vol. 4to, *French*.

Dupin, Tillemont, Speed, Stowe, &c. and as to some Rites, Ceremonies and Customs, I have been obliged to recur to such Authors as have controverted those Subjects, and produced the best Authority they could in support of their Point.

In the Dictionary of Sects annexed to this Work and of ambiguous Words and Phrases, I have in general, quoted the Author from whence I have borrowed the Definition, or received my Information; and where Words have been so differently understood and applied, as scarce to have a distinct determinate Meaning, I have given the Sense of more Authors than one, that the Reader may form a juster Idea thereof.

The WHOLE is most humbly inscribed to every ingenious and impartial Enquirer after Truth, by

The AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

RELIGION essential to Man; his Duty and Happiness. Natural Religion defined, its immutable Obligation, &c. Revealed Religion, its Expediency and Utility. General History of the Old Testament. The superior Excellency of the New Testament. Truth, its Nature, and Importance in general, and of religious Truths in particular. The principal Source of Uncertainty in our Enquiries after Truth, the Causes of Corruption in Christianity, and the Difficulties attending the Understanding the Scriptures, considered. Truth, nevertheless, attainable in all important and essential Points, with the Means of acquiring it. The right Privilege and Duty of free and impartial Enquiry, as opposed to Prejudice and Bigotry, and to a careless Indifference. The abuses of free enquiry. The Advantages attending the diligent Pursuit of Truth, and the pernicious Consequences of Ignorance and Error. With some Remarks applicable to the Subjects of the Work.

RELIGION, in its genuine principles and influences, is so sublime and excellent, in its nature and effects so noble and beneficent, and so admirably suited to the state and circumstances of reasonable, intelligent and accountable creatures, that it justly claims to be the matter of our first and principal concern.

Man is a creature formed for religion, *ἄνθρωπος ὁ θεοσεβής* *, is dependent on a supreme Being, capable of knowing on whom he depends; and has a natural awe

* Plato in *Timæo*.

of his Creator impressed on his mind. He naturally admires the grandeur, beauty, and use, that abound all over the world; he has a natural curiosity to prompt him to enquire after the *cause*, and has reason to discover to him a supreme all perfect mind, as the only adequate cause of this infinity of beauty and good; his passions of veneration, gratitude, fear and hope, naturally terminate in this Being; as the only object equal to them; and his natural apprehensions of eternity, naturally excite him to secure, by goodness and piety, the favour of that Almighty and eternal Being, who alone can make him happy during that everlasting state of which he is apprehensive. And now laying all these properties together, *self-love, reason, a social disposition*, and benevolent affections, a strong *sense and love of beauty*, a natural *dependence on a supreme Being*, and a natural *awe of him*, &c. we have an idea of human nature, and from this idea of human nature, the natural difference betwixt virtue and vice, and the excellency of religion, will appear *.

Religion is generally considered as natural or revealed, and these are differently defined, and as differently estimated as to their importance. *Natural Religion defined.* Natural religion, Mr. Wollaston tells us, consists in "the pursuit of happiness, by the practice of reason and truth †. Mr. Chambers defines it to be, "whatever we discover to be due and meet by the mere dictates of natural reason ‡." This is sometimes called ethics or moral virtue, and includes in it these duties which, on the principles of reason, a man owes to God, to society, and to himself; the duties we owe to the Deity resulting from our relation to him, as our Creator, benefactor, lawgiver, and judge, and as the original fountain of all goodness, wisdom, beauty and happiness are veneration, grati-

* Grove's Moral Philosophy, p. 139.

† Wollaston's Religion of Nature delineated, p. 52.

‡ Chambers's Dictionary, Art. Religion.

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tude, love, resignation, dependence, obedience, worship and praise, which, according to the measure of our finite capacities, ought to maintain some proportion to the grandeur of the object whom we love, and the greatness of our obligation. The duties we owe to society of peculiar obligation, are filial or conjugal; but in general we owe to others, love, justice, sincerity, fidelity, charity, the love of our country, and universal benevolence. The duties respecting ourselves are prudence, fortitude, the government of the appetites and passions, humility and resignation; these constitute the temper of happiness, and are the elements of our perfection and felicity*. The essence of all religion, says an ingenious writer, is love to God and love to man†.

Another judicious author says, by natural religion we are to understand all those things, which intelligent beings, by the right exercise of their reasonable faculties, can discover to be their duty, without a supernatural revelation to direct them, and upon that discovery so made, or capable of being made, which they are obliged to pursue, and practise in their several circumstances, offices or relations in life. Thus to love and reverence the Deity, to do justice between man and man, between our neighbours and ourselves, and to be charitable and benevolent to all proper objects, are all of them branches of natural religion; which every man's reason may discover to him, and which the present constitution of things requires from him, and necessarily subjects him to‡.

The law of nature, says another ingenious gentleman, is the will of God, relating to human actions, grounded in the moral differences of things, and because discoverable by the light of nature, obligatory upon all mankind. It is called the law of nature, 1. Because of the manner of its promulgation,

* Martin's Ethics. Wollaston's Religion of Nature, §.vi. N. 19.

† Rational Catechism, p. 59. See also Fordyce's Philosophy.

‡ The eternal obligation of Natural Religion, p. 1, 2.

which is by natural reason ; 2. Because of its source or foundation, this law resulting from the respective nature of Beings, and things : of Beings, as God and man, and of things or actions, as morally good or evil, and having different physical effects ; 3. Because it is the law of God. Nature is but a *fictitious* * person, and all that is said of the wisdom of her designs, and operations of her power, or of her laws, is to be ascribed to him, who is the author of nature. The law or religion of nature is so called, says the judicious Dr. Conybeare †, either because it is founded in the reason and nature of things, or else because it is discovered to us, in the use and exercise of those faculties which we enjoy. The religion of nature, as it is considered in these different views, will import quite different things ; in the former it signifies a perfect collection of all those moral doctrines and precepts which have a foundation in the nature and reason of things ; but in the latter it is such a collection as may be discovered by us, in the exercise of our proper faculties, according to the means and opportunities we enjoy.

Dr. Clarke has been very clear and explicit in the discussion of this point ; he says there is a necessary and immutable difference of things, that constitute an action morally fit or unfit ; that some actions are in themselves fit and reasonable, and incumbent on men to do, even separate from the consideration of those rules ; being the positive will or command of God, and abstracted from any views of private and personal advantage here, or reward hereafter ; and *vice versa* ‡, he adds, page 6, That though these moral obligations are incumbent on all reasonable creatures, an-

* The Stoics often made use of the word Nature, as another name for God. Senec. de Benef. 47. Grove's Moral Phil. vol. II. p. 139.

† Defence of revealed Religion, p. 11, &c.

‡ Dr. Samuel Clarke, on the unchangeable Obligations of natural Religion, p. 5.

Bott's Morality founded on the Nature of Things.

tedent to any command, or in respect to the reward; yet that it is certain and necessary that moral good and moral evil will be attended with reward or punishment; because the same reasons which prove God himself to be necessarily just and good, and the rules of justice, equity and goodness, to be his unalterable will, law, and command, to all rational beings, prove also that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him, by observing these rules, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto; and consequently that he cannot, but some way or other, make a suitable difference in his dealings with them, and manifest his supreme power and absolute authority, in finally supporting, maintaining and vindicating, effectually the honour of the divine laws, as becomes the righteous governor and disposer of all things; and as this does not appear visible in the administration of providence in this world, it follows, that there will be a state after this, wherein there will be an impartial retribution. That this is so apparently founded on truth, that there have been almost in every age, even among the Heathens, some wise and brave, and good men, who have by study and application made great discoveries in regard to these truths, and deduced suitable inferences from them*. Thus Cato wisely asserts, if there is a God, he must delight in virtue, and those whom he delights in must be happy.

Dr. Chandler says †, there is as certain and immutable difference between moral good and evil, virtue and vice, as there is between darkness and light, bitter and sweet; a difference not accidental to, but founded on the things themselves; not merely the result of the determination and arbitrary will of another, but which the very ideas of the things themselves

* Ibid. pages 8, 9.

See our Account of Deism.

† Dr. Samuel Chandler on the necessary and immutable Difference between moral Good and Evil. Protestant System, p. 280.

do really and necessarily include. In like manner, piety to God, gratitude for benefits received, justice and charity, temperance and chastity, and the like virtues, are as essentially distinct from, and do convey as opposite and distinct ideas to impiety, ingratitude, injustice, uncharitableness, intemperance, lust and the like vices; that it is absolutely possible they can form the same ideas, or raise the same sentiments or apprehensions in our breast; and though men may disregard these intrinsic and necessary differences in their practice, thro' the warmth of passion, or the powerful influence of corrupt habits; yet they can never destroy that difference, nor make the ideas of them to coincide, and become indivisibly the same. P. 295, he adds, This difference between moral good and evil, and the fitnesses and unfitnesses which they necessarily infer, is as easily and certainly to be discerned by mankind, as the difference between any natural or sensible objects whatsoever; and as virtue is, in the consideration and idea of it, much more lovely and commendable than vice, so the natural consequences with which they are almost constantly and inseparably connected, plainly shew, which is most reasonable and fit in itself, and inforce the indispensable obligations of moral virtue*. And page 307, But besides this, surely there is a God that governs the world, who is not wholly inattentive to, and regardless of the moral state and character of his creatures; a God who, from the purity and rectitude of his nature, will ever look with the highest complacency on those who resemble him in his moral perfections; whilst those, whose actions shew them to be degenerated from the principles and rules of moral virtue, will be the objects of his displeasure.

These apprehensions of moral virtue appear to be interwoven with the nature of man, and the importance of morality to the human life, and to its main and principal ends, shews wisdom and design in giving men

* Chandler Ibid, p. 295.

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the sense and knowledge of it so universally. When a species of intelligent beings are sent into the world with sentiments of morality, which are so evidently conducive to their happiness, filling with a variety of rational pleasure, eminently useful to each other, and advancing their perfection and felicity in proportion to the practice of moral virtues, it sufficiently demonstrates they were not originally invented by politicians, and imposed upon credulous mankind as the dictates of nature. It is hence evident, that morality is a part of the human constitution, and owes its source to its author: not that we are necessarily virtuous, as we are sensible or intelligent; for the very notion of it imports free-agency or choice; but the true meaning is, that the mind of man is so framed, as, when it attains the full exercise of its rational powers, to be necessarily sensible of moral obligations, and cannot willfully and premeditatedly act a contrary part, without doing violence to itself, which is all the necessity which is consistent with the nature of such a Being, and the nature of morality*.

One important use which Dr. Chandler†, and many other judicious authors, draws from these premises is, that this difference of things, arising out of their very natures, leads us to form just conceptions of the perfections and attributes of God. For instance, when we say, that God doth necessarily exist, doth not this suppose a natural and fixed difference between necessary and precarious existence? In like manner, when we say, that God is eternal, immense, intelligent, all-powerful, and the like; we mean, that God is not a temporary, limited, unconscious, impotent Being; and of consequence do suppose, that the distinctions are not arbitrary, but as necessary and eternal as the Being of God himself. In like manner, with respect to God's

* Abernethy's Sermons on the Being of God, proved from Human Intelligence and Morality. System, p. 36, 37, 38.

† Chandler's Immutable Difference. System, p. 286.

moral perfections, when we say, that God is wise; and just, and good, and eternally and unalterably so; we mean, at least, that God is not a foolish, unrighteous, evil, and cruel Being; and therefore must suppose that the difference between wisdom and folly, justice and injustice, evil and good, cruelty and mercy, is absolutely eternal and unalterable as God himself, of whom we affirm the one and deny the other; and therefore is not owing to his willing that it should be so, nor alterable at his pleasure, nor dependent on him for its continuance; for if the distinction between these moral entities or objects was merely arbitrary, and originally the result only of the will of God, it can never be affirmed of him that he is eternally and immutably the one and not the other. For upon this supposition he was not true, or just, or good, till he willed to be so, and might have been weak, unjust, and evil, by a like determination of his will; if there be no essential immutable difference in the things themselves. Nor can there be any possible certainty of God's continuing for the future to be wise, and just, and good, and not the contrary; for if there be no other difference between the one and the other, but what the will of God hath constituted; that will ceasing, or altering these distinctions, in consequence must cease or alter, and God may be evil instead of good, or rather good and evil at the same time; which is an evident absurdity and contradiction.

On these accounts, says our author, I apprehend it plainly appears, that the very notion of God implies the necessary, essential, immutable, and independent difference between moral good and evil; and, indeed, without this supposition, we could have no sure and fixed rule of action to ourselves as reasonable creatures; for if piety, justice, charity, and the like virtues, are the creatures of mere power, and the precarious effects of absolute will and pleasure, power and will may immediately alter them, cancel men's obligations, to
regard

regard them; and substitute in the room of them impiety, injustice and cruelty, as the great obligations and duties of human nature*.

Again, moral good and evil are a kind of relative terms, that is, they do suppose, either in idea or actual existence, certain reasonable beings, and certain relations in which they stand to each other. Before ever the creation was formed, God was in and of himself possessed of infinite perfection, of all that power and wisdom, which could not but exert themselves in all acts of justice and goodness to his creatures. After their being brought in actual existence, the original fitness of which conduct towards them was clearly discerned by God; whilst they were yet only present in idea to his mind, and arose from those apprehended relations which were actually in time to subsist between God and them. And as God had nothing to determine him in the formation of the world, but the direction of his own infinite understanding and wisdom, he was undoubtedly at liberty to form what systems of beings he thought proper.

When, indeed, God had actually given being to reasonable creatures of such particular capacities and circumstances, their relations to each other; then, the fitness and obligations of those duties resulting from them, became certain and necessary, and were no longer dependent on the will of God, whether they should carry in them any reasonable obligation or not; and when they became the matter of an immediate divine command, they were not therefore reasonable only because commanded, but commanded because naturally and antecedently reasonable. And the reason of this is evident, because the fitness and unfitness of moral good and evil, are as necessary and certain, as the natural and original difference between them. This, therefore, must be

* Vid. Cicer. de Legibus, l. 1. c. 16.

See Dr. Samuel Clarke on the unchangeable Obligation of Natural Religion, p. 50 & seq.

the supreme, immutable and universal rule of action to all reasonable beings whatsoever. It is the one certain and unerring rule of the Divine conduct, and consequently the most certain, the most amiable, and worthy rule of action to every reasonable creature*.

And the evident tendency of virtue, says another ingenious author, is not only the private happiness of single persons, but the good of the whole human kind; an universal benevolence links us together, and interests every one of us in the affairs of another, so far as to desire and endeavour their safety and happiness, not inconsistently with our own. There are other particular determinations of the virtuous kind, such as compassion, natural affection, gratitude, and the love of our country, so confessedly natural to men, as by common consent to obtain the name of humanity; but so prevalent in some as to put them upon the most self-denying and hazardous enterprizes for the good of others, and take the highest pleasure when they see the effect of them promote a general good†.

When we consider the constitution of human nature, with all its powers, affections, and principles of action, as the work of God; then that sense of right and wrong of moral good and evil, which is the great distinction of mankind from all the inferior orders, appeareth to demand particular notice; as being not only in itself considered, the highest and most important faculty of the mind, but as what is given us for directing our conduct, and as what principally pointeth out to man his chief end, and that which is his supreme good. That the sense of right and wrong must have been intended by the Author of our beings as a law or rule for directing our conduct, is evident; for it is impossible to separate a sense of right and a sense of

* See this more largely treated of in Doctor Chandler's Discourse, before cited.

† Abernethy, on the Unity of God, proved from the apparent Unity of Design in his Works. System, p. 91.

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obligation: *A thing is right, therefore it is to be done; a thing is wrong, therefore it is not to be done*; is the original law or language of nature, with which every man is acquainted; and while the sense of right and wrong remaineth, the heart instantly and necessarily approveth what appeareth to be right, and condemneth what it judgeth to be wrong*.

But it is an inquiry of the utmost moment to virtue and to human happiness, how the Creator is disposed and affected towards his creatures, as they observe it, or deviate from it in their actions. It may be imagined, and this appeareth plainly to have been the sense of some persons, that though the universe, and all the creatures in it, are the work of an original intelligent cause, perfectly wise, powerful, and beneficent; and the whole creation is governed by the sole superintending providence of this being, and particularly, that all the instincts and affections planted in the heart of man, are his workmanship; yet he doth not attend at all to the temper or behaviour of men, as being according to the moral quality of them, the objects of his approbation or displeasure: that, though he hath given to his creatures, the sense of good and evil, of right and wrong, as a means of serving those purposes by them which he had in view; yet he himself hath not that regard to right and wrong, which we find in our own minds, nor any thing analogous; and therefore he is not displeased with the transgression of this law of our nature, nor hath any pleasure or complacency in our obedience, and that we are never to expect any interposition of his, to give us tokens of his favour, for having pursued that which is right, or of his displeasure, for having done what is wrong: that men are by the laws of nature thoroughly furnished for serving the purposes of this life; but that this is all that is

* Duchal on God's Moral Government. System, p. 313.

And Doctor Foffer on Natural Religion and Social Virtue, vol. II. p. 12.

to be expected, and that by establishing and maintaining this constitution of things, the Creator hath made provision for preserving the world in that state which will answer his original design.

Very widely different from this way of thinking is the sense of those who consider the supreme Being as a lawgiver, and a moral governor, in the proper sense of the word; believing, that as he hath, in the sense of right and wrong, written a law upon the heart of every man, and hath planted in every man a conscience to approve or disapprove of his actions, as they are good or evil; so he is himself attentive to the conduct of every individual, is pleased with the conformity of his temper and actions to the law that he hath given him, and displeased with the transgressors of it, and will interpose to testify his pleasure or displeasure by such rewards and punishments as perfect wisdom shall see fit and necessary to answer the end of a moral administration; that though God doth not interpose in the present state of things by any acts of his, so as fully to answer what reason ultimately expecteth from a perfect moral ruler, in rewarding the good, and punishing the bad; yet another state of things is to be expected, in which the great design of his moral administration shall be perfected, and he, as judge of the world, will do right to every subject of his moral kingdom.

I cannot better close the preceding remarks on natural religion, and thereby introduce the advantages of a revelation, than with the testimony of Dr. Middleton, in relation to the religious and moral sentiments of Cicero, the greatest Heathen philosopher, whose ideas were probably the most refined of any man unassisted by revelation.

The Doctor, having observed that the scheme of morality professed by Cicero was certainly the most complete that the Gentile world had ever been acquainted

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quainted with, the utmost effort that human nature could make towards attaining its proper end, and taken notice of some considerable deficiencies in it, he adds, "From this general view of Cicero's religion, one cannot help observing, that the most exalted state of human reason is so far from superseding the use, that it demonstrates the benefit of a more explicit revelation; for though the natural law, in the perfection it was carried by Cicero, might serve as a sufficient guide to the few, such as himself, of enlarged minds, and happy dispositions; yet it had been so long depraved and adulterated by the prevailing errors and vices of mankind, that it was not discoverable even to those few, without great pains and study, and could not produce in them at last any thing more than a hope, never a full persuasion; whilst the greatest part of mankind, even of the virtuous and inquisitive, lived *without the knowledge of a God, or the expectation of a futurity*, and the multitude in every country was left to the gross idolatry of the popular worship."

This gives us abundant reason to reflect on the advantages we enjoy by the divine light of a revelation, without the pains of searching, or danger of mistaking, whereby we have not only the hope but the assurance of happiness, and are not only the believers, but the heirs of immortality.

It must however be acknowledged, that christianity presupposes the truth of natural religion. Whatsoever subverts natural religion, does consequently much more subvert christianity, and whatsoever tends to confirm natural religion is proportionably of service to the true interest of the Christian *.

I have dwelt the longer on these particulars, as I apprehend it is of great importance to direct our enquiries in religion, as well as to regulate our conduct; and it will probably appear, on the most careful exa-

* Dedication to Clarke, and Leibnitz's Papers.

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mination, that the internal evidence of a revelation, * *its conformity to the reason and nature of things*, is the strongest proof of its divine original.

Let what is written in the books of the New Testament be tried by that which is the touchstone of all religion; I mean, that religion of nature and reason, which God hath written in the hearts of every one of us, from the first creation †.

But notwithstanding the Creator and Sovereign of the world has given a law to the whole human race, written on the heart, and arising from the nature of man, from his relation to the author of his Being, and his connections with mankind; this law was far from answering the purposes for which it was designed. Tho' it was agreeable to the dictates of uncorrupted affections, and to our natural ideas of the amiableness, truth and propriety of action, it was frequently perverted by vice, and the powers of reason darkened by superstition, till at length they became fashionable, *Expediency* and the immoralities of mankind blinding the *of a Reve-* understanding to such a degree, as to render *lation.* the imaginations of the heart habituated to evil. The Almighty saw fit to extirpate almost the whole human race, and the descendants of the pious family, that was saved unawed by the deluge that had depopulated the earth, and running into the vices for which the old world was punished; the divine Being saw it expedient to interpose, and, by making revelations of his will, to awaken and fix their attention, in

* We would not be understood to mean, that revealed religion must be in every respect conformable, but only that it be not in any contradictory to natural; for it is certain, that there are many particulars in revealed, which makes no part of natural religion, and which the purest and most improved reason alone could never have attained the least conception of.

See *Heatbroke on Natural Religion, the Foundation of Revealed*, pag. 40.

† Prideaux Letter to the Deists, Sect. 3.

order

order to recover them from idolatry, to the knowledge and worship of one living and true God, and to convince them that the path of virtue is that of happiness.

Revealed Religion is what we learn to be *Revealed* our duty by some supernatural means, as by *Religion* an exprefs declaration of God himself in *defined*.

the Scriptures *. The Bible or Scriptures contain the writings of the Old and New Testament; of whose antiquity, authenticity, expediency and excellency, many learned volumes have been wrote, by persons properly disposed and qualified, to do justice to the sacred writings, and contribute to their greater acceptableness and usefulness to mankind †.

That the several books of the Old Testament, particularly those of Moses, are of greater antiquity than any other writings, appears very evident from the language and characters in which they were originally wrote, and the constant reference made to them by all other writers of antiquity, and from the several principal matters contained in them ‡.

It begins with the creation of the world, and informs us of the origin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, their state of innocence, perfection, duty and happiness, and of their sin, defection and consequent punishment ||. It opens to our view the propitious intentions of the Deity, for their recovery and final happiness §.

It likewise informs us of the general degeneracy of mankind, and of their destruction by the univer-

* Chamber's article of Religion. Bennet on the Truth, Usefulness and Inspiration of Scripture.

† Simpson's Divine Authority of Scripture.

Doctor Conybeare's Defence of Revelation against Tindal.

‡ Le Clerc's Grotius, p. 23.

Doctor Callamy's Sermon on Inspiration, p. 31.

|| Lamy's Introduction to the Scripture.

Jameson's Introduction to the Pentateuch.

§ Doctor Watts on the Ruin and Recovery of Mankind.

Thompson's Mediator.

sal deluge *. It treats of the character and conduct of Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Israel, and of many other illustrious persons for our imitation †. It gives us a general history of the Jews, of their laws and statutes prescribed by God, and dispensed by his servants, Moses, Aaron, &c. for their regulation and government, ceremonial as to their sacrifices, moral as to the ten commandments, and judicial respecting their œconomy and discipline, with the sanctions whereby they were enforced ‡.

It affords more clear and ample discoveries of the being and perfections of God, than was discoverable by the light of nature ||. In many parts of this history, the scenes of the divine providence are admirably displayed, evidencing that God is the moral governor of mankind, the lover and rewarder of virtue §; but in a peculiar manner it exhibits many great and glorious prophecies and promises of a Messiah, all making way for and introductory to that far more glorious dispensation of truth and grace by the gospel of Jesus Christ ¶.

It is not my province, neither will it consist with the limits of my introduction, to attempt a vindication of the divine authority of the scriptures; but I refer the reader to such judicious authors as have particularly entered into the merits of the subjects, and obviated the principal objections to particular passages **. I may however observe, that the more diligently the writings of Moses and the prophets are attended to, their connections with the writings of the New Testament

* Lamy's Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, p. 265 & seq.

† Doctor Watt's Catechism and Scripture History.

‡ Jameson on the Pentateuch.

|| Doctor Clarke on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, p. 198.

Doddridge's Family-Expositor, vol. I.

§ Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity against Collins.

¶ Doctor John Newton of Prophecies, 3 vol.

** Waterland's Scripture vindicated, in answer to Tindal.

Sir Isaac Newton upon Daniel, p. 252.

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will be more conspicuous, and their evidence jointly strengthened*. Upon the whole, however dark and ambiguous some parts of the Old Testament may appear, we have sufficient reason to conclude from its internal characters, as well as traditionary evidence, that it is of divine original, adapted by infinite wisdom to the state of the world at that time †.

But of the *Christian revelation*, the gospel *The Christian Revelation* of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have the highest reason to admire its *superior evidence* and *transcendent excellency*. Evidence may be considered as internal or external. The internal evidences depends upon the design and tendency of the history; the probability of the things related; the consistence of the several parts, and the plainness and simplicity of the narration, &c. &c.

External evidence, respects such certain signs and matters of fact, as may be an undeniable evidence of the authors divine commission, by miracles wrought; by the accomplishment of prophecies, the testimony of many credible witnesses, agreeing in all material circumstances, &c. &c. ||.

And every attentive reader may observe several of those internal characters, and likewise many of the external proofs apparently applicable to the writings of the New Testament. This however opens such a wide field to my view, that it will be impossible for me to do justice to a subject of this nature, within the intended limits of my introduction; I shall nevertheless introduce some arguments in favour of

* Prideaux's Connection of the Old and New Testament, 4 vol. Millar's History of the Propagation of the Gospel, vol. I. p. 654, 450.

† Doctor John Newton on Prophecies.

Doctor Doddridge calls it an invaluable treasure, which demands our daily delightful and thankful perusal, and such as it is capable of being defended against its subtlest enemies. Evid. of Christianity briefly stated in the Protestant System, p. 385.

|| Doctor Samuel Clark on Natural and Revealed Religion.

the Christian revelation, and refer the reader to many curious and judicious writers in defence of the Christian system; evincing *that it is indeed a divine relation*.

Doctor *Lardner* has very learnedly and judiciously considered the nature of evidence, and applied it to the Christian scheme, wherein he has with great labour, and we hope with proportionable success, obviated the objections of the most subtle of its opposers *.

Doctor *Clarke* † has likewise considered the several principal arguments in support of the divine authority and excellency of the Christian institution, in the following particulars. 1. That the Christian religion, considered in its primitive simplicity, and as taught in the scriptures, has all the marks and proofs of its being actually and truly a divine revelation. 2. That the practical duties it enjoins, are all such as are most agreeable to our natural notions of God, and most perfective of the nature, and conducive to the happiness and well-being of men. 3. That the motives by which the Christian religion enforces the practice of the duties it enjoins, are such as are most suitable to the wisdom of God, and most answerable to the natural expectations of man. 4. That the peculiar manner with which the Christian religion enjoins the duties, and urges the motives before-mentioned, are exactly consonant to the dictates of sound reason, or the unprejudiced light of nature, and most perfective of it. 5. That all the doctrines, which the true, simple and uncorrupted Christian religion teaches, are, tho' indeed many of them not discoverable by the light of nature, yet, when discovered by revelation, most agreeable to sound unprejudiced reason.

* Doctor *Lardner's* Credibility of the Gospel History, 15th vol. Reverend Mr. *Leland's* Answer to the principal Deistical Writers.

† Doctor *Clarke* on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 220 & seq.

The Doctor then applies his postulatum to the following particulars : That it cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed that God should make a revelation of his will to mankind ; and that in such a revelation, wherein God freely proclaims the remission of sin, and the acceptableness of repentance, he should nevertheless have appointed such a sacrifice or expiation for sin, as might at the same time be a sufficient testimony of his irreconcilable hatred against it. That a Mediator should be appointed between God and man, through and by whom the prayers of sinners may be offered up, so as to be acceptable in his sight. That the greatest difficulty arises indeed from the dignity of the person (the only begotten Son of God); but even this, upon due enquiry, will appear to have nothing in it contrary to the nature of God, or the condition of things. Or lastly, that there is any just objection to be drawn from the Christian revelation, not being in fact universal *. From hence the Doctor endeavours to prove, that the history of the Life of Christ, contained in the New Testament, is a true revelation of matter of fact ; that God has appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by his Son Jesus Christ, in order to reward every man according to his works †. That, in order to this final judgment, not only the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body ; but the body itself also shall be raised again ‡. That after the resurrection and the general judgement, wherein every man shall be judged according to his works, they that have done well, shall go into everlasting happiness § ; and they that have done evil, into everlasting punishment §.

* See also Doctor Benson's Reasonableness of Christianity, in answer to Christianity not founded on Argument.

† Doctor Sherlock on the Future Judgment.

‡ See the Arguments for the Resurrection of the Body, and Objections answered at the end of the Religious Philosopher.

§ Of the Nature, different Degree, Duration, &c. See Laurence, Watts, &c.

§ Doctor Samuel Clarke's Sermons.

The Doctor recites two or three of the principal of the preceding propositions, farther to explain and illustrate them, viz. that all the doctrines, which the Christian religion teaches, that is not only those plain ones, which it requires to be believed as fundamental to salvation, but even all the doctrines it teaches, as a matter of truth, are agreeable to sound and unprejudiced reason*.

Secondly, that every one of these doctrines has a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform mens lives, and to correct their manners. This, says he, is the great end and ultimate design of all true religion †.

Lastly, that all the doctrines of the Christian faith do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational scheme of belief, than any that the wisest of the ancient philosophers ever did, or than the cunningest of modern unbelievers can invent or contrive.

Our author then proceeds to treat of miracles in general, of their nature and kinds, and how far the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ may be brought in proof of his doctrines. His life and character is likewise considered as an accomplishment of the prophecies concerning him. The testimony of our Saviour's disciples he likewise introduces; which in all its circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing, that they neither could be imposed on themselves, nor could have any design of imposing upon others. That the apostles left their testimony of the works and doctrine of Christ in their writings; which writings have been transmitted down to us, by an uninterrupted succession, through all intermediate ages, without any considerable corruption or error, such as might in any

* See Locke on the reasonableness of Christianity.

† N. B. These points which are usually considered as the essential part of the Christian doctrine, as well as the arguments by which that institution is supported, I have chose to give from the writings of Doctor Clarke on these subjects, as I apprehend them best adapted to my present purpose, and agreeable to the sentiments of our most eminent divines.

wife diminish our certainty of the truth of the whole. In sum, there is no matter of fact in the world, attested in any history with so many circumstances of credibility, with so many collateral evidences, and in every respect attended with so many marks of truth, as this concerning the doctrine and the works of Christ *.

There are indeed many ingenious divines, both of the established church, and other denomination of Christians, who have wrote with great candour and accuracy on the holy scriptures, suggesting many rational and useful hints for reconciling many seeming contradictions, and obviating some of the most material objections of unbelievers; and this too, by such just and natural interpretations of the most obscure passages, by comparing the original text with the author's design, &c. as have afforded much satisfaction †. Others have expatiated on and illustrated the coincidence of scripture with reason, or shewn the real and proper connection there is between natural religion, and many of the most sublime evangelical truths ‡; while others have shewn the peculiar transcendent excellency of the gospel precepts §; the comparative fitness and obligation of moral and positive duties §; and have also explained and applied those divine promises and sanctions by which our obedience and duty is enforced. A farther reference to some of the principal authors might suffice in this place; tho', as it is on so agreeable and important a

* Doctor Samuel Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 328.

† Lock's Reasonableness of Christianity,

Doctor Clarke's Paraphrase on the Evangelists.

Pile's paraphrase on the Epistles. Doctor Taylor on the Romans.

‡ Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Wright.

Sykes on the Christian Religion against Collins.

§ Lawrence of Christian Morals and Christian Prudence, vol. I. Leechman of the wisdom of God in the Gospel revelation,

§ Burrough's on positive Institutions.

subject, I shall be excused if I am somewhat more particular.

It is not without very good reason, that some ingenious authors have entered into the views of what might be reasonably expected as the subject matter of a revelation from God. Doctor Doddridge suggests, 1. That the state of mankind was such as to need a divine revelation; 2. That there is from the light of nature considerable encouragement to hope that God would favour his creatures with so needful a blessing as a revelation appears to be; 3. We may easily conclude, that if a revelation were given, it would be introduced and transmitted in such a manner as Christianity is said to have been; 4. That the main doctrines contained in the gospel are of such a nature, as we might in general suppose those of a divine revelation would be, namely, *rational, practical and sublime* *; or more particularly, that it coincides with the unbiassed reason of mankind †; gives us more just and enlarged ideas of the perfections of the Deity ‡, and instructs us in the nature of that worship, which ought to be paid to him ||; inculcates and enforces the practice of all relative and social duties §; extends our ideas of the rewards of virtue; and confirms our hopes in the divine goodness, beyond what unassisted reason could possibly do; and this is shewn not to be the mere surmise of prepossession and fancy; for it has been evinced, that when the most accurate schemes of the antient philosophy was ineffectual to rectify the sentiments, and reform the conduct of mankind, christianity produced such an amazing change and reformation in both these important respects, as shewed it to be indeed the *power of God*

* Doddridge's Summary of the Evidences of Christianity, Protestant System, p. 376.

† Doctor Samuel Chandler's Vindication of Christianity.

‡ Doctor Samuel Clarke on the being and attributes of God.

|| Reverend Mr. Bulkley, Nature of Religious Worship, p. 142.

§ Doctor Foster of Natural Religion and Social Virtues, vol. II.

unto salvation to every one that believe *. Again, it might farther be supposed, that a divine revelation would contain some things which could not have been learnt from the highest improvement of natural light; and that others should be hinted at and referred to, which our feeble faculties should not be able fully to comprehend; such as the existence and providence of God, the resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, &c. which the scripture reveals. Let then, says our author, the evidences of christianity be the subject of your serious reflection, and frequent converse; especially study your Bible, where there are such marks of truth and divinity to be found. Above all, make it your care to practise the rules there laid down, and then you will find your faith growing in a happy proportion, and will experience the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man will (resolutely and faithfully) do his will, he shall know of the (christian) doctrine, whether it be of God †.

But what is observed with so much truth of the Christian religion, must always be understood of christianity in its primitive purity and simplicity, and as such recommended to be read with attention, and regarded as the rule of faith and practice by every Christian, as sufficient to salvation.

Christianity, says Mr. Barker, is plain and simple, and no impure mixtures are to be made or allowed with it; no Jewish observances; no human inventions; no old or new traditions: to this singly, or without addition or alteration, should Christians stick and adhere, keeping to the truth as it is in Jesus, and preserving the simplicity of the gospel; not mingling it with any thing that is false and foreign to it; not concealing any part of it, or mixing any falshood with it, or wresting

* Dr. Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr Wright, p. 25.

Dr. Leechman on the Wisdom of God in the Gospel Revelation.

† Dr. Doddridge's Evidences Briefly Stated, p. 380.

and perverting the true sense and meaning of it, to serve our own ends, the lusts of others, or any worldly purposes whatsoever †.

Were this property attended to, we should find the important advantages of a revelation would be more universally answered in the promotion of truth, religion, and harmony, and charity even amongst men of different sentiments: and I sincerely congratulate my countrymen, that, for the last fifty years, most of our reverend prelates have represented the great doctrines of religion in a rational and consistent manner; unconditional decrees have been sufficiently exploded; the important point of justification set in a true light, and the scriptures recommended as a sufficient rule of faith and practice, abstracted from an undue attachment to establishment and party; and that the will of God is the only rule immediately binding to the conscience; and subjoin this reason for the assertion, that he only can have authority over the conscience to prescribe to it, who is able to judge the conscience, the prerogative of God alone.

The ingenious author of the *Rational Catechism* gives us a very compendious view of the preceptive and doctrinal part of the New Testament. For, says he, what are the great duties it recommends, but such as are the most sublime and important, spiritual adoration, purity, and integrity of heart, of life and conversation, the keeping a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men? This is explained in a most perspicuous manner in numerous instances of particular duties, the essence of all which is said to be love; intensely towards God, and extensively towards men: and the advantages we enjoy by revelation, principally consist in exhibiting the life and character of Jesus Christ as our example, and in the clear evidence it

† Rev. Mr. Barker's Sermon at Salter's Hall against Popery, p. 7.
See also the Bishop of London's second Pastoral Letter, p. 25 to 30.

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gives us of a future life, the resurrection of the body, and a righteous retribution*. And,

In a discourse of the nature, design, and tendency of christianity, a worthy prelate observes there were none of the doctrines of the gospel calculated for the gratification of mens idle curiosity and useless speculations, much less for the exercise of our credulity, or as a trial how far we could bring our reason to submit to our faith. But as, on the one hand, they were plain and simple, and such as their agreeableness to the rational faculties of mankind did recommend to our relief; so, on the other hand, they had an immediate relation to practice, and were the genuine principles and foundation upon which all human and divine virtues were naturally to be superstructed †.

And in opposition to *superstitious observances* on the one hand, and *unbelievers* on the other; it is observed, that was the original simplicity and purity of the gospel attended to, we should find that christianity consists not in laborious, troublesome, and expensive observances, or in perpetual grimace and affectation; but in a steadfast faith in the divine mission of Jesus Christ, and in a steady practice of the duties he requires. And if such who believe not in Jesus Christ, would but diligently compare his precepts with those of the greatest lawgivers of antiquity, and his life and actions with the most celebrated of the philosophers, and weigh the solemn appeals to acknowledged facts in the apologies for christianity, presented to the Heathen Emperors; we are of opinion they would consider him, at least, as a divine person, as one who all along acted by a divine mission and a supernatural power ‡.

* Rational Catechism, p. 59 & seq.

† Archbishop of York's Sermon before the Queen, 1704.

Archbishop Usher on the Unity of God, p. 15, 17, 28.

‡ Laurence, Rector of Yelvertoft, Christian Morals and Christian Prudence, vol. I.

With respect to those who plead, that the whole of religion consists in moral duties, it has been justly answered by Mr. Prior * : “ But is the Christian religion only a republication of the law of nature, or merely a refined system of morality ; it is surely something more ; it is an act of grace, a stupendous plan of Providence, designed for the recovery of mankind from a state of degradation and ruin, to the favour of God, and the hopes of an happy immortality through a mediator. Under this dispensation, true religion expresseth repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as the person appointed by the supreme authority of heaven and earth, to reconcile apostate men to their offended Maker, as a sacrifice for sin, our vital head, and our governing Lord. This is religion as we are Christians.” And the peculiar excellency of the Christian religion lies in its bringing to light life and immortality, when wrapped up almost in impenetrable darkness. This hath set the great truths of religion in a clear and strong view, and hath proposed new and powerful motives to influence our minds, and to determine our conduct : nothing is enjoined to be believed but what is worthy of God ; nothing to be practised, but what is friendly to man. Some important branches of this dispensation reason indeed could not discover, nor can it now justly arraign, as not founded in wisdom and goodness.

Christianity, says the reverend Mr. Milner, is the perfection of all religion ; the design of it is great and noble, namely, to possess our minds with right apprehensions of the Supreme Being, of moral good and evil, and of an happiness most worthy our rational nature ; and it heightens the idea of its excellence, to see it interwoven with a particular dispensation of providence and grace, for rendering it more effectual †.

* Rev. Mr. Prior's Reasonableness of the Christian Life, p. 56.

† Rev. Mr. Milner's Preface to Religious Liberty asserted.

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The late Dr. Gibson, bishop of London, gives us his sentiments to the same purpose, viz. Though it is true, that one end of Christ's coming was to correct the false glosses and interpretations of the moral law, and one end of his instituting a ministry was to keep up in the minds of men true notions of natural religion, and a just sense of their obligations to the performance of moral duties ; yet it is also true, that another end of his coming was, to establish a new covenant with mankind upon gracious terms, and most engaging promises, to shew us the method of pardon and reconciliation to God, and eternal happiness, and to prescribe rules of greater purity and holiness, by way of preparation for greater degrees of happiness and glory ; so these are without doubt the distinguishing excellencies of the Christian religion, and which it behoves every one to adhere to, as he would be intitled to the privileges and blessings of the gospel-covenant*.

On the other hand, if some will believe that trusting in Christ is their whole duty, and so excuse themselves from the observation of the moral law ; and others will affirm, that the observation of the moral law is sufficient, and so will forego the benefit of Christ's redemption ; if some will contend that Christ hath done all, and others that he hath done nothing ; they err as if they knew not the scriptures. The gospel account is as full and express as words can make it ; on the one hand, that faith in Christ is the foundation of a Christian's title to heaven ; and on the other hand, that repentance and good works are the necessary conditions of obtaining it†.

* First Charge, p. 19.

† See Second Pastoral Letter, p. 63, Octavo Edit. See also Bishop Hoadley's Terms of Acceptance, and his Preservative ; and Dr. Chandler's Knowledge and Practice necessary to Happiness.

And in illustration and vindication of the divine wisdom in the mediatorial scheme of man's redemption, and the glorious method of salvation by Jesus Christ; that it displays the harmony of those perfections of the divine nature, which seem most opposite in their tendency and aspect against sinners, sets in the clearest view God's displeasure against sin, and at the same time opening a way for the most extensive exercise of mercy to sinners; yea, and enhancing both the justice and the mercy, more than if there was no atonement required; and also a surprising and affecting demonstration of the inviolable regard God hath to the righteous sanction of his law, and his concern for the honour of his government; that this is the most effectual means to awaken the sinner to a just sense of what he hath deserved, and doth at the same time yield him the strongest support and encouragement, under the most afflicting sense of his guilt and danger, and carries with it the most powerful motives to persuade him to be reconciled unto God, and influence him to a willing obedience for the time to come *. Dr. Clarke calls it that wonderful composition of justice and mercy, which men and angels must for ever adore, but can never sufficiently praise and celebrate †.

With respect to positive institutions, which some have as it were created as insignificant, and others have laid too great stress on; bishop Hoadley has given us a plain scriptural account of, viz. That when the great author of our holy religion publicly declared what were the doctrines upon which he would build his church and kingdom, he instituted two apt and significant ordinances to be observed in his

* Jesus Christ the Mediator, by Tomkins, p. 157. Dr. Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Wright. And the Essay on the Credibility of the Gospel annexed, by an unknown Hand.

† Dr. Clarke's Sermon on the Sufferings of Christ. Leechman's Wisdom of God in the Gospel-Revelation.

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church. One was baptism, that rite or ceremony by which the members thereof should profess their faith in, and discipleship to Christ. The other injunction was, that his church and people should stately, in communion and fellowship with each other, eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of the author and finisher of their faith; and in this they were to continue, in order to shew forth and keep up the remembrance of his life and death till he come *.

And when the scriptures are properly regarded as our rule, we shall find they exhibit to our minds, besides the principles of natural religion, only a few evangelical doctrines and precepts, which are wisely adapted to improve our sentiments of God, give us a just idea of his dispensation of grace and truth by Jesus Christ, and tending to cultivate that rectitude of mind and life, which may in some measure fit us for the happiness therein promised.

And it is acknowledged by all protestant Christians, that the scriptures, more especially the writings of the New Testament, contain a plain perfect rule of faith and practice, in opposition to the necessity of a living infallible guide, and the authoritative imposition of creeds and articles of faith. Hence that immemorable prelate before-mentioned asserts, † The church of Christ is the kingdom of Christ; he is King in his own kingdom; he is sole lawgiver to his subjects, and sole judge in matters relating to salvation; his laws and sanctions are plainly fixed. Their faith was once delivered by him; the conditions of their happiness was once laid down by him; the nature of God's worship was once declared by him; and it is easy to judge, whether of the two is most becoming a subject of the kingdom of Christ, that is, a member of his church, to seek all those particulars in those plain,

* Bp Hoadley's Plain Account.

† Hoadley's Nature of the Kingd. and Church of Christ, p. 30.

short declarations of their King and lawgiver himself, or to hunt after them through the infinite contradictions, the numberless perplexities, the endless disputes of weak men in several ages, till the enquirer himself is lost in the labyrinth, and perhaps sits down in despair or infidelity. If Christ be our King, let us shew ourselves subjects to him alone, in the great affair of conscience and eternal salvation, and, without fear of man's judgment, live and act as becomes those who wait for the appearance of an all-knowing and impartial judge, even that King whose kingdom is not of this world.

Much to the same purpose, in opposition to the pretended authority and infallibility of the church of Rome, and her boasted tradition, Dr. Chandler says, "we have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Christ and his Apostles but from the records of the New Testament; and as these contain the whole revelation of the gospel, all that we are to believe and practise as Christians, it is an undeniable consequence, that we can no otherwise demonstrate our subjection and fidelity to Christ, as Lord and lawgiver in his church, than by our care in acquainting ourselves with the sacred records of truth, and religiously adhering to them, as the only rule and standard of our faith and worship *; the adhering to which is an essential note of the Christian church †. This therefore is the only true antiquity, to which as Christians we are to appeal ‡. The church of God, the true church of Christ, is built entirely upon the scriptures ||. The Christian church is properly represented as one body, or a society, incorporate by the charter of the gospel under Jesus Christ, as supreme head and governor §. For, as Mr. Leavesly says, Christ and his Apostles, by preaching and delivering

* Dr. Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 13. † 15. ‡ 21.

|| Dr. Wright on Scripture and Tradition, p. 10.

§ Mr. Lowman on Schism, p. 26.

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the gospel truth, and by warning us against false and deceitful workers, call all men every where to adhere to the truth as it is in Jesus *. The Bible, then, or the Old and New Testament, is acknowledged by all Protestants, as the canon, the rule, the only rule of faith and practice.

I shall close the whole with that remarkable paragraph of Chillingworth, which whoever hears or reads, as the language of one converted from Popery by the study of the scriptures, cannot help being greatly pleased with it. Addressing himself to a writer of the Romish church, he thus pleads the Protestant cause, " Know then, Sir, that when I say the religion of Protestants is in truth to be preferred before yours ; as on the one side, I do not understand by your religion the doctrine of Bellarmine or Baronius, or any other private man amongst you ; nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne or of the Jesuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company or society amongst you ; but that wherein you all agree or profess to agree, the doctrine of the council of Trent ; so accordingly on the other side, by the religion of Protestants, I do not understand the doctrine of Luther or Calvin, or Melancton, nor the confession of Augsburg or Geneva, nor the catechism of Heidelberg, nor the articles of the church of England ; no, nor the harmony of Protestant creeds and confessions ; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with one accord, as the undoubted perfect rule of their faith and actions, that is, the Bible. The Bible, I say the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants, whatsoever else they believe besides it : and the plain, irrefragable, and indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold as matters of opinion, but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it

* Leavelly on Reformation, p. 36.

themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without most high and schismatical presumption. I, for my part, after a long, and (as I verily believe and hope) impartial search of the true way to eternal happiness, do profess plainly that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock only. I see plainly, and with mine own eyes, that there are Popes against Popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age. Traditive interpretations of scripture are pretended; but there are few or none to be found. No tradition but only of scripture can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved to be brought in, in such an age after Christ, or that such an age it was not: in a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of scripture only for any considering man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe, this I will profess, according to this I will live, and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly, lose my life; though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me any thing out of this book, and require whether I believe or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this, God hath said so, therefore is it true. In other things, I will take no man's liberty of judging from him, neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian, I will love no man the less, for differing in opinion from me; and what measure I mete to others, I expect from them again. I am fully assured that God does not, and therefore men ought not to require any more of any man than this: To believe the scripture to be God's word,

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word, to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it*.

I can see no reason, says a judicious author, for undervaluing revelation, in order to exalt reason, nor on the other hand to disparage reason, since they jointly concur in furnishing us with the most noble and unexceptionable principles of religion. What but revelation gave to Wollaston so much the superiority over Cicero in his delineation of the religion of nature, particularly with regard to the unity and moral perfections, and providence of the Deity, and the duties owing to him?

All this will be readily acknowledged by Protestant Christians of every denomination, while others perhaps do not easily perceive the reasons upon which this principle of their faith is founded, and they raise a variety of objections to the authenticity, perspicuity, reasonableness, and excellency of the Christian revelation; the most considerable of which will be taken notice of in a following section. I shall, first, endeavour to ascertain the proper import of the term *Truth*, its importance, &c.

Truth is a term used in a variety of senses, and applied to different sciences and subjects. Logical truth is the conformity of things with the ideas themselves†. Moral truth is the conformity of words, gestures, and actions, with the heart‡. Mr. Chambers defines logical truth to be in direct opposition to falsehood, and is applied to the propositions which answer, or accord to the reality of the thing, whereof something is affirmed or denied||. And Mr. Wollaston says, those propositions are true, which express things as they are, or truth is the conformity of those words or signs by which things are expressed to the things themselves§. Truth, likewise, signifies veracity, or a conformity of words to thoughts, pure,

* Quoted by Mr. Wright in his Sermon at Salter's hall against Popery, page 52. † Marlin. ‡ Ibid. || Chambers. § Wollaston.

or unadulterate; exactness or conformity to rule; reality, as opposed to fiction; honesty, integrity, &c. || It is used for the doctrines of the gospel, Gal. iii. 1. as opposed to Jewish ceremonies, John, i. 17. and as the genuine or original, as opposed to spurious*. These are some of the principal senses in which it is used; but as the right use of reason, in the enquiry after truth, is what constitutes the science of logic, variety of other definitions and distinctions relative to this subject may be seen in peculiar treatises on that subject.

The different senses in which I have considered truth, or to which this term is applied, convey to our minds an idea of its nature and importance, and that there is a real essential and absolute utility and advantage in the possession of it.

Importance of Truth. Indeed the pursuit and acquisition of truth is of infinite concernment to mankind;

hereby we become acquainted with the nature of things, both in heaven and earth, and their various relations to each other. It is by this means we discover our duty to God and our fellow-creatures; by this we arrive at the knowledge of natural religion, and learn to confirm our faith in divine revelation, as well as to understand what is revealed. Our wisdom, prudence, and piety, our present conduct, and our future hopes, are all influenced by the use of our rational powers in the search after truth†.

The love and desire of truth is a principle implanted in the nature of man; it has generally an easy access to unbiassed minds, and will assume its empire and triumph over error, even in spite of popularity, interest, and undue influence from others; and religious truths have been often known to arm the mind with integrity, superior to the severest persecution. Hence Polybius, the Roman historian, observes, that

|| Johnson. * Cruden.

† Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 2.

truth may be opposed, but it cannot be subdued*: and Cicero, to the same purpose, that truth always carries such a force with her, that she cannot be overcome, neither by the flattery of art, nor ingenuity of men; and though she had no advocate or patron in her cause, yet she would be able to defend herself†.

But this is not universally acknowledged. There are men of a sceptical turn of mind, who assert there is no possibility of distinguishing truth from falsehood: and therefore they have abandoned all pretences to knowledge, and maintain strenuously that nothing is to be known.

The first men of this humour made themselves famous in Greece by the name of sceptics, that is, seekers. They taught, that all things are uncertain, though they allowed that some were more probable than others. After these arose the sect of the Pyrrhonics, from Pyrrho, their master, who would not allow one proposition to be more probable than another. But of this sect an ingenious author observes, that their own doctrine gives their profession the lie; because they determined concerning every proposition, that it was uncertain, and believed that as a certain truth, while they professed there was nothing certain‡.

The most important question then on this subject is this, what is the criterion or distinguished mark of truth? How shall we know when a proposition is true or false? There are so many disguises of truth in the world, so many false appearances of truth, that not only one man differs in his sentiments from another, but one sectary absolutely deny what another esteem undoubted and fundamental. Let us therefore enquire what is the general criterion of truth; and, in order to this, it is proper to consider what is the reason why we assent to the truth of one proposition, and

* Polybius in Excerptis, lib. xii.

† Cicero Orat. in Vatinius.

‡ Watts's Logic, p. 172.

deny another; and this will be found to arise from a clear and distinct perception, or full evidence of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas to one another, or to things; for since our minds are of such a make, that when the evidence is exceeding plain and strong, we cannot withhold our assent, we should then be necessarily exposed to believe falshood, if compleat evidence should be found in any propositions that are not true. But surely the God of perfect wisdom, truth and goodness, would never oblige his creatures to be thus deceived; and therefore he would never have constituted us of such a frame as would have rendered it naturally impossible to guard against error*.

There are two desires interwoven in the frame of our beings, the desire of truth, and the desire of happiness; in both which there is a kind of infinity, which arises after this manner. By the contemplation of my own soul, I gain the ideas of several perfections with which I perceive it to be adorned; following therefore the impulse of my own mind, I enlarge the prospect, and widen my ideas more and more, till lost in the conception of a being, who possesses all these perfections, and very probably many more, with the additional characteristics of infinite and eternal: Now it is the nature of the understanding, and of the will, to pursue the supreme truth, and the supreme good; and consequently while I have a being in view, in whose idea is lodged infinite truth and infinite good, which alone is able to answer that idea of something like infinity that is in our desires, I shall never rest satisfied in any allotment among the creatures, though in the finest apartment in the universe, and accommodated with every good, short of a correspondence and intercourse with the Deity†.

It is true there are some speculative points which God hath placed beyond our reach; and there are

* Dr. Watts.

† Grove, vol. I, p. 92.

others of an abstruse, ambiguous nature, in the various branches of science, &c. that require much previous learning, strength of natural abilities, study and application, in the use of proper helps to understand and explain. These can in no wise be the concern of all, and can only with any propriety be the subject of enquiry to a few, whose dispositions and abilities, leisure and profession in life, may render it at all eligible; and after all, a diversity of sentiments will necessarily arise. Nor can we reasonably expect the same degree of evidence in all cases or subjects, that properly concern us to make the subjects of our enquiry. There are many things in this dark and imperfect state, wherein we must be content with probability, where our best light and reasoning will reach no further; we must balance arguments as justly as we can; and when we cannot find weight enough on either side to determine the scale with sovereign force and assurance, we must content ourselves perhaps with a small preponderation. This will give us a probable opinion; and these probabilities are sufficient for the daily determination of a thousand actions in human life, and many times even in matters of religion.— Suppose, for instance, I had been honestly and long searching what religion I should chuse, yet I could not find that the arguments in defence of christianity arose to compleat certainty, but went only so far as to give me a probable evidence of the truth of it; though many difficulties still remained, yet I should think myself obliged to receive and practise that religion; for the God of nature and reason hath bound us to assent and act according to the best evidence we have, even though it be not absolute and compleat; and as he is our supreme Judge, his abounding goodness and equity will approve and acquit the man, whose conscience honestly and willingly seeks the best light, and obeys it as far as he can discover it*.

* Dr. Watts's Improvement of the Mind; p. 208.

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Here it may be proper to survey the several kinds of evidence, or the different ways whereby truth is let into the mind, and which produce accordingly several kinds of knowledge ; and these we shall distribute into

these six, *viz. sense, consciousness, intelligence, reason, human and divine testimony.* 1. The

Evidences of Truth. evidence of sense, is when we form a proposition according to the evidence of any of our senses ; it is upon this evidence that we know and believe the various occurrences in human life ; and almost all the histories of mankind, that are written by eye and ear-witnesses, are built upon this principle.

It is a principle of the Epicureans, that the senses are not capable of being deceived ; for besides that the structure of the organs, and the circumstances of objects considered, they ought not to represent things otherwise than they do. The senses are purely passive ; they receive impressions from surrounding bodies, but pronounce nothing concerning them ; that is the business of the mind, which delivers its opinion upon the divers appearances of sense, and too often not more hastily than wrong. When therefore we talk of the errors of the senses, the meaning is, that things are many times in themselves quite different from what they appear to the senses ; and that they who take their measures of judging from the senses, will unavoidably be led into a thousand mistakes.

The reasons why people trust so much to sense, I believe, are principally these :

I. If sense may err, why not reason ? If one power and faculty may be deceived, why not all others ? At which rate we shall have no criterion of truth, nor be in possession of certainty ; but universal scepticism must bear down all before it. I answer, that because sense may be imposed upon, it follows not that reason may ; in case sense misleads us, reason may set us right again. So that here God hath provided a higher faculty to correct the errors occasioned

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caſioned by the faculties below it; and perhaps the fallaciousneſs of our ſenſes was deſigned for this very end, that we might make the more frequent uſe of our reaſon. But ſhould reaſon be deceived, there is no faculty above this to inform it better; and are not the wiſdom and goodneſs of God our ſecurity, that he would not frame us with ſuch a conſtitution of mind, as ſhould naturally lead us into error? Beſides this, we are to conſider, that the miſtakes of ſenſe (when it does miſtake) are not dangerous; it has little to do with religion, upon which depends our moſt important intereſt. But reaſon rightly underſtood, and rightly managed, is to be the meaſure of our conduct; and conſequently if free from prejudices, we may be aſſured that ſhall never err in matters of moment and conſequence.

II. If ſenſe may be deceived in one or more inſtances, why not in all? and if in all, we can be certain of nothing. I anſwer, this way of arguing is entirely inconcluſive, becauſe the wiſe Governor has furniſhed us with reaſon to find out our miſtake; and this, by comparing things together, it eaſily does. Upon the whole, we may conclude with this obſervation, that our ſenſes were not given us to inform us ſo much what things are in themſelves, as of the relation they bear to each other, and to our bodies*.

III. As we learn what belongs to the body by the evidence of ſenſe; ſo we learn what belongs to the ſoul by an inward conſciouſneſs, which may be called a ſort of internal feeling, or ſpiritual ſenſation of what paſſes in the mind: Thus it appears that we obtain the knowledge of a multitude of propoſitions, as well as ſingle ideas, by theſe two principles, which Mr. Locke calls ſenſation and reflection. One of them is a ſort of conſciouſneſs of what affects the body, and the other

* Grove, v. p. 409.

is a consciousness of what passes in the mind *. Some philosophers define it an inner sentiment of a thing; whereof one may have a clear and distinct notion: in this sense they say, that we do not know our own soul; nor are we assured of the existence of our own thoughts; otherwise than by consciousness †.

IV. Intelligence relates chiefly to those abstract propositions, which carry their own evidence with them, and admit no doubt about them. Our perception of this self-evidence in any proposition, is called intelligence; it is our knowledge of those first principles of truth, which are as it were wrought into the very nature and make of our mind. Accordingly an intelligent being, must have some immediate object of his understanding, or at least a capacity of having such: an intelligent being, among the immediate objects of his mind, must have some that are abstract and general; those ideas or objects that are immediate, will be adequately and truly known to that mind, whose ideas they are: these propositions are called axioms or maxims, or first principles; these are the very foundation of all improved knowledge and reasonings; and such an immediate view of things in their own nature, is sometimes called *intuition*.

V. Reasoning is the next sort of evidence, and that is, when one truth is inferred or drawn from others, by natural and just methods of argument; as, when I survey the heavens and earth, this gives evidence to my reason, that there is a God who made them ‖. Thus, by the help of truths already known, more may be discovered; for those inferences which arise presently from the application of general truths, to the particular things and cases contained under them, must be just, and will hold good, not only in respect of axioms and first truths, but also and equally of theorems and other general truths. When they are

* Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 178.

† Chambers.

‖ Dr. Watts's.

more known, these may be capable of the like applications, and the truth of such consequences as are made by virtue of them, will always be as evident as that of the theorems themselves *: in other words, every just consequence is founded on some known truth; by virtue of which, one thing follows from another, and if the premisses are true, and the inferences are just, they will be so too. That power which any intelligent being has of surveying his own ideas, and comparing them; of forming to himself out of those that are immediate and abstract, such general and fundamental truths as he can be sure of, and of making such inferences and conclusions as are agreeable to them, or to any other truth after it comes to be known, in order to find out more truth, prove or disprove some assertion, resolve some question, determine what is fit to be done upon occasion, &c. the case or thing under consideration, being first fairly stated and prepared, is what I mean by the faculty of reason, or what intitles him to the epithet *rational*; or, in short, reason is the faculty for making such inferences and conclusions, as are mentioned under the preceding proposition †.

“The propositions, which I believe upon this kind of evidence, are called conclusions or rational truths, and the knowledge we gain this way is properly science.”

It is likewise remarked by the aforecited judicious author, in treating of the nature and foundations of probability, that the force of it results from *reason* and *observation* together ‡. As the one is not sufficient without the other, reason without *observation* wants matter to work upon, and observations are neither to be made justly by ourselves, nor to be rightly chosen out of those made by others; nor to be aptly applied,

* Wollaston's Religion of Nature, p. 43. 4to Edit.

† Ibid. p. 45. Some useful observations in the seq.

‡ This is objected to by other authors, as those observations arise from the forementioned springs of knowledge.

without the assistance of *reason*; both together may support opinion and practice in the absence of knowledge and certainty; for those observations upon the nature of men and things, which we have made ourselves, we know; and our own reasoning concerning them, and deductions from them, we know; and from hence there cannot but arise in many cases an internal obligation to give our assent to this, rather than that, or to act one way rather than another: and as to the observations of others, they may be so cautiously and skillfully taken under our notice, as to become almost our own, since our own reason and experience may direct us in the choice and use of them.

VI. Another kind of evidence, is the testimony of others, and this is a large part of our knowledge. Ten thousand things there are which we believe, merely upon the authority or credit of those who have spoken or written of them; it is by this that most of the transactions of human life are managed, we know the characters and laws of our present governors, as well as things that are at a vast distance from us, in foreign nations, or in ancient ages: according as the persons who inform us of any thing, are many, or few, or more or less wise, and faithful, and credible, so our faith is more or less firm or wavering, and the proposition believed either certain or doubtful; but in matters of faith an exceeding great probability is called a moral certainty *. Histories written by faithful and credible authors, and read with judgment, may supply us with examples, parallel cases, and general remarks, for forming our manners and principles too; and by the frequent perusal of them, and meditation upon them, a judicious judgment is formed of many dubious cases, and of matters of great importance.

To conclude, that we ought to follow probability in this case, as well as the forementioned, is evident; because where there is no greater certainty to be had,

* See Dr. Watts's Logic, and Ditton on the Resurrection.

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it becomes our only light and guide ; and it must be reasonable to direct our steps by probability, when we have nothing clearer to walk by ; and, if it be reasonable, we are obliged to do it. When there is nothing in the opposite scale, or nothing of equal weight, this in the course of nature must turn the beam *.

With regard to divine testimony, though it comes under the denomination of the evidence of testimony, is of a superior nature ; and the assent to a proposition upon this evidence is stiled *divine faith*, and so far as we understand the meaning of this word it produces a supernatural certainty, or an absolute infallible assurance.

VII. Inspiration is a sort of evidence distinct from all the former, and that is when such an overpowering impression of any proposition is made upon the mind by God himself, that gives a convincing and indubitable evidence of the truth and divinity of it. But as this is of the highest kind of evidence, chiefly, if not solely, confined to the prophets, and some of the earliest apostles and first propagators of christianity, it is not so applicable to our present purpose, to the nature of those truths it concerns us to know in the state and circumstances in which Divine Providence hath placed us. This kind of evidence has been so often pretended to, either as working on the outward senses, or by impressions on the imagination, spiritual feelings, sudden and powerful impulses on the mind, whereby some persons have fancied a superior or divine light and power attending them, which they could neither explain or prove to the satisfaction of rational and judicious persons, that such pretensions have been often, and, I think, very justly exploded, as the effect of weakness and enthusiasm.

The various kinds of evidence upon which we believe any proposition, afford us the following remarks.

* Wollaston's Religion of Nature, p. 59.

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I. That there are some propositions that admit of different kinds of evidence, and of which we have an unquestionable certainty, and consequently may be considered as fundamental truths, to direct our inquiries and conduct.

II. That, though some of these evidences are superior to others in their nature, and give a greater ground of certainty in some points, more immediately those which are the subject of divine revelation; yet that reason in its own nature will always lead us into truth in matters within its compass, if it were used aright, or it would require us to suspend our judgment where there is want of evidence; and it must, at the same time, and with equal certainty, be admitted, as the proper means to judge of the reality and degrees of other kinds of evidence, upon which any other proposition may present itself to our minds, and claim our assent*. But it will also follow, that if the judgment be corrupted, and the understanding darkened, with respect to religious principles and moral truths, which concern the rectitude and just conduct and true happiness of intelligent and free beings, he is then under as great an incapacity of reasoning, and incapable to discern the proper difference of actions and characters, as if he had been formed with a natural incapacity of reasoning.

Religion is wholly founded in reason, and directed by it; and therefore, when this light, this sacred and divine light, is not attended to; when imagination, passion, and prejudices, and false conceptions, usurp the place, and are allowed all that authority and influence, which only belong to truth, and the dictates of a sober well-informed judgment, it must unavoidably follow, that the truths of religion will be obscured by igno-

* See the Nature of Moral Evidence, illustrated in fifteen Propositions in Ditton's Discourse of the Resurrection of Christ, from p. 123 to 164.

rance and prejudices, and its native beauty sullied by extravagance and enthusiasm.

But as this is a subject of the utmost importance, I shall here take occasion to inquire into the most considerable and general causes, by which the light of reason is obscured, and the judgment perverted and enslaved; causes that have been the most prevailing in all ages, and which, as long as they are allowed to subsist, will in all future time have the same fatal effect.

I. The first of these that presents itself to a most superficial observer, is indolence and inattention: every one must acknowledge, that it is not the mere faculty of reason that illuminates the mind; but the proper exercise and careful improvement of it, by frequent reflection and impartial inquiry: for a man of the most strong and extensive natural abilities, who never thinks nor never examines, cannot be expected to make half the proficiency in divine knowledge as a more deliberate and ingenious inquirer of a much inferior understanding; nay, his judgment may be as weak and confused, for want of proper care to inform it aright, and, thro' a shameful negligence, his reason may be as grossly fallacious, and his principles as repugnant to common sense, as those that find admittance where human reason is in a lower and imperfect state; so that indolence, and, which are the necessary consequences of it, laziness and superficial examination, are the certain foundation of error and intellectual darkness.

II. Another common cause of ignorance and mistakes in our inquiries, is prejudice, which throws a mist before the understanding, and hinders it from discerning clearly the evidences, and beauties, and advantages of truth. It gives the judgment a particular and strong bias towards one set of principles, which of consequence are readily admitted as the best and most rational; and the contrary truths, though of the most momentous kind, are as naturally discredited and vilified. The arguments by which they are re-

commended are diminished, and considered as mere trifles; but the objections against them magnified, as decisive and unanswerable. Thus will prejudice, though of the most gross and malignant kind, engross all the fairness, candour, and skill in argument to itself, and paint on the side of truth and reason nothing but superficial knowledge, or narrowness of mind. The prejudices by which mankind are influenced, are various, but have all the same infatuating and blinding quality; for whether it be prejudice arising from education or interest, or the prejudice of implicit veneration for great names, whom we have been taught to call Rabbi, or an unreserved submission to human authority; which soever of these bears the principal sway, it has always tended to the same point, and the effect of it has been this, making men conceited in ignorance, and obstinate in error.

III. Sensuality is a never-failing means of a darkening and perverting the judgment; for, by inflaming the passions, it indisposes the mind for the calm contemplation and pursuit of truth in general. It depresses the very faculty of reason, and renders it unfit for sublime exercises. It introduces a false taste, and destroys the relish of mental pleasures; for sense and reason are such contrary principles, that if the gratification of the first be our supreme and most favourite entertainment, we shall regard the latter so much the less in proportion, and perhaps contract an utter aversion to its employments and exercises. But in an uncommon degree does sensuality unfit for an impartial study of religious and moral truth, after which it begets a prejudice of which it must needs entertain some kind of horror, as of a reprover, a condemner, an awakener of guilty suspicions, and a scourge of unlawful excesses. To what a sad condition must that man be reduced, whose disposition and conduct in a manner force him to dread and fly from thinking, that he may be the more quietly and serenely miserable?

IV. Next

IV. Next to sensuality, the most universal corrupter of good principles, and extinguisher of reason's light, is superstition. It alarms with panic terrors, and makes a man afraid of free inquiry, as if honesty, and ingenuity of mind, which are the very essence and genuine spirit of an acceptable virtue and piety, were crimes that deserved damnation; and an abject slavish credulity, which is a reproach to the character of a man, was however the chief excellence and duty of religion, and the surest recommendation to the esteem and favour of the Deity. Superstition always proceeds from weakness of mind; it supposes the understanding to be disturbed, and fancy or fear, or presumption, to have the ascendant; and as these prevail farther, the judgment will be more and more debased, and the intellectual darkness proportionably increased; and when once a man hath brought himself to believe in earnest that the great God of the universe is a weak, capricious Being, pleased and offended with trifles; that the dishonouring human reason, by substituting forms, bodily gestures, or penances, in the room of the reformation of evil habits and inward rectitude, and practising ceremonies of devotion, equally absurd and useless, is the way in which he chuses to be served and worshipped; when once a man has brought himself really to believe these are great and important points, in which religion consists, he seems to have lost the common principles of reason. And it is no wonder to find that superstition, which abounds in infinite instances in a like kind, is lost in confusion, and goes on from one degree of folly and extravagance to another, till, in the end, it quite obliterates all rational sense of God, and of his worship, and the very natural conscience of good and evil. False notions of God, the basis and support of superstition, are fundamental errors, which destroy the ground-work of all true judgment about virtue and piety, and on which no superstructure can be raised suited to the foundation, that has any thing in it but

weakness and falshood; and therefore, while such errors are unhappily entertained, it is scarce possible in nature that any other consequence should follow than this, that, with respect to religion, the grand concern of human life, the light that is in us will be total darkness †.

These are the principal causes of that ignorance and error that have so much prevailed in the world; but there are a variety of others, which are either preventive of inquiry, or impediments that obstruct the acquisition of truth; which though I would not be tedious in expatiating upon, yet the mention of some of them may have its use.

First, the want of forming in our minds some proper principles and rules of judging concerning truths in general or particular. Want of due reflection upon those ideas we have, or may have, and using words and phrases that have no fixed determinate ideas, and consequently must be destitute of that knowledge which might otherwise be gained from the contemplation of them and their relations. Attempting to judge of things quite above our reach, whereby our ideas are confused, and assert or deny without being at all able to demonstrate the truth or falsity of the proposition. Not understanding wherein the force of an argument or just consequence consists, from whence it comes to pass that persons assert such a thing to follow from such a position, when it is no axiom, no theorem, no truth, that we know of. Defect of memory and imagination, which is often shallow, treacherous, confused, and cannot be depended upon. Attending too much to sense; for as necessary as our senses are to us, there are certainly many things which fall not within their notice; many which cannot be exhibited after the manner of sensible objects, and to which no images belong. Want of retirement, and the practice of thinking and reasoning by ourselves: Truth is the offspring of silence, unbroken meditation,

† Abstract from Dr. Foster of Revealed Religion, vol. I.

and

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and thoughts often revised and corrected. A fondness for our own opinions, in which we chanced to be educated, that have been inculcated by parents or tutors, that have the stamp of antiquity, or the sanction of public authority. For these reasons, if they may be called such, many have not only shewn an indifference as to true principles, but have refused even to hear any arguments against their favourite imbibed opinions; though, for the same reason, had they been born in an idolatrous, Mahomedan, or Popish country, they must have been of the religion in which they were educated. Lastly, if persons of this turn of mind have at any time permitted the sound of truth in their ears, and have been led to think or inquire at all, it has been so superficial, and under the influence of such prepossession and bigotry, as have proved the hindrance of their illumination and conviction.

But perhaps it will be asked, are there not many difficulties that obstruct the acquisition of truth in general, involuntary and unavoidable, arising from the depravity of human reason? Reason, it is said, which was once the dignity and glory of human nature, is now depraved, weakened and enfeebled by our original defection, so that it is at best a very uncertain guide with respect to truth or happiness. But however depraved and disabled by the fall, he is still capable of discerning what is right or wrong in every case which properly concerns him; man is still capable of extending his inquiries very far into other concerns; can search deep into the recesses of nature, and by steady, careful inquiry, joined with experience, explain many abstruse points in the system of the universe, and illustrate the wise laws and wonderful dispositions of providence; and can it be imagined that our own proper duty as men, and truths that are of importance for us to know, are placed beyond the reach of our understanding? This would be rendering the state of man deplorable indeed, and reflect on the wisdom and care of the
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the Divine Providence. And as to the doctrines and duties of revelation, they must be capable of arriving at the true sense of these too, unless it be a revelation unrevealed ; taking it for granted, as it is clearly a doctrine of the New Testament, that whatever degrees of divine assistance is necessary in aid to our faculties, they are always afforded to the diligent and well-disposed. If it should be asked, how can we possibly know that those inward impressions that we feel, are really divine ? The answer must be, from their correspondence with the eternal revelation, and with the light and dictates of reason. And from hence it will follow, that, in the present state of our faculties, however impaired and disordered, we are capable of acquiring a deep and lively impression of moral and divine truths. For is it out of the power of a man to consider seriously ? Is it beyond his natural abilities, to reflect often on affairs of the utmost consequence ? Can he have a just theory of the Christian religion, and at the same time not be convinced of its intrinsic excellence, and infinite importance ? Such an insinuation as this redounds as little to the credit of christianity, as to the honour of human nature.

Should it be said that man, by the original bias of his nature to evil, and its aversion to what is good, is necessarily disinclined to, and indisposed for reflection on such subjects as these ; I answer, the strongest disinclination does by no means infer an utter impossibility ; nay, the contrary is most evident : for let the indisposition be equal to what is suggested in the objection, man must still be a free agent, and have it in his power to be either virtuous or vicious, or else he is absolutely incapable both of religion and moral government ; and can we imagine that our nature is so odd, and so defective a composition, as to be capable of forming many good resolutions, and of rectifying many errors of conduct in civil life, and, at the same time, indisposed and unable to act the part of a rational,
moral

moral and intelligent being, in matters of a religious nature?

Here it may be proper to take notice of the principal causes of corruptions in christianity, which are generally urged as another source of difficulty in the search after religious truth, and in the study and right understanding the scriptures, in a way of private judgment.

When christianity was first promulgated to the world, it stood upon the principles of reason and common sense; and happy would it have been for mankind, if they had but suffered it to remain upon this foundation. But men were no sooner drawn over to it, than, deserting their natural notions of things, they began to explain it upon artificial notions. The great misfortune was, that many of its first converts came from the schools of the philosophers; and being prepossessed with fantastic opinions and systems of their own, they began to garnish, and new-model it, according to every man's taste and humour. A plain, simple religion, such as the Christian, founded upon the principle of reason and common sense, was too insipid of itself, and wanted seasoning with philosophy, before it could be relished by those primitive prelates. Here was the foundation of every heresy, and the source of all that spurious mixture, which corrupted the purity of the gospel, so soon after its establishment. The philosophy of Plato was the first in vogue amongst Christians; and this seems to have happened, not only because this philosophy was imagined to bear some distant resemblance to christianity; but also because it was the best calculated to flatter that enthusiastic turn of mind, which unhappily prevailed in those early times.

If then we would shew ourselves wise men and good Christians, let us be concerned only for truth; and in order to find it, consider calmly, and examine impartially; let not indolence enervate and stupify our minds, let not prejudice captivate and enslave us; let

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not sensuality unfit us for intellectual exercises, let not superstition make us weak and childish, and taint all our principles, with respect to the very essentials of religion; but rather let us cultivate an honest candid temper, and let the evidences of truth have an unbiassed influence on our minds,

Some general OBJECTIONS to FREE INQUIRY, answered.

Obj. 1. **T**HAT the obscurity in which the fruitful imaginations of men have buried many truths, especially in christianity, has made divinity so difficult a science, as to render many parts of it unintelligible to the generality of Christians.

Ans. Mankind, however depraved and disabled by the fall, which some are very fond of magnifying, are still capable of extending their inquiries very far in many intricate cases, respecting their own civil concerns, and those of others; and consequently can be under no incapacity of investigating truths of importance, which must necessarily as nearly concern them. "Notwithstanding all the pretended incapacity, they are capable of discerning what their duty is, and wherein their true happiness consist; they can search deeply into the recesses of nature, by study and careful inquiry joined with experience. They are able to explain many abstruse parts of the system of the universe, and to illustrate the wise laws and wonderful dispositions of providence; and can it be imagined, that their own proper duty as men is beyond the reach and comprehension of their understanding? Can it be conceived that their own happiness is so perplexed and inscrutable a subject, that they can form no clear and settled judgment concerning it? Deplorable then is the destiny of men, and very ungracious seems to be the care and providence of their Creator *. But this has been al-

* Dr. Foster's Sermon, vol. iii. p. 299.

ready taken notice of. Besides, if truth is liable to suffer by the disguise and false glosses put upon error, there is the more reason to bring all propositions to the standard of truth, and to certain principles and rules of judging concerning them.

Obj. 2. That free inquiry and controversy in religion have a tendency to divide Christians into sects and parties, and introduce, not only a diversity of sentiments, but oftentimes uncharitable censures and animosity, even among the nearest friends.

Ans. As all are bound to think about religion, so it is impossible that all should think alike; but their thoughts will unavoidably issue in different sentiments and opinions. This has been manifestly the case in all ages; men have always had different opinions about religion, such, at least, as have had the liberty to make use of their reason and judgment in it. This no doubt was the case of the apostles themselves, in things wherein they were not immediately inspired or directed. And how manifestly was it the case of others of the first Christians? Some believed they might eat all things; others, that were weak, believed that they might eat only herbs. Some esteemed one day above another, others esteemed every day alike, Rom. xiv. 2. 5. Some were for Paul, others for Apollos, &c. and it would be needless to shew there was the like difference amongst Christians in the following ages of the church, whilst we have the transactions of their synods and councils, and so many volumes of their controversies, and whatever may be inferred from thence to the prejudice of free enquiry, men may and do generally agree in all essential points; and it cannot be the duty of persons under a state of imperfection, as ours is, to think alike; for, to say nothing of the different measures of mens faculties, what a strange turn does education give to their minds, even when there is something of equality as to natural endowments? Their understandings are not tutored and brought up,

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as I may express it, the same way ; the different masters they have sat under, the different books that have been put into their hands, the different company they have kept, and conversation they have had, the various subjects their thoughts have been employed upon (which have been represented to them by their catechists, teachers, tutors, in a very different light) will necessarily determine them to different judgments and apprehensions ; in short, there is scarce a greater variety in voices and features, than there is in sentiments and opinions in the mere speculative points of religion, nor can this be avoided without a miracle, or constant universal inspiration* ; and this has led the pious and well-disposed of every denomination, as well as those eminent in learning, to place the essentials or fundamentals of religion in a few necessary articles, of which we shall take notice. However, this is certain, that Jesus Christ hath provided no other remedy against errors, or a diversity of opinions, than reason and argument, offered with meekness and charity. We may propose truth with all possible advantage, recommend it by all proper arguments, and thereby endeavour to reclaim the erroneous ; but when we cannot in this way of the gospel prevail with our mistaken brethren, we must leave them to God and their own conscience †.

Obj. 3. But our inquiries, it is urged, are unnecessary; we are to take knowledge from the priests lips. It is an instance of presumption to pretend to understand and judge for ourselves in matters of a religious nature, and thereby call in question the superior judgment and authority of those who are appointed the ministers of the gospel over us. And does it not savour of pride to oppose our judgment of any point to the judgment of general councils, convocations, and all the learned members and decrees of the church ?

* Bennet's Irenicum.

† Ibid,

Ans. This, says Dr. Whitby *, is that pride which those 7000, who would not bow the knee to Ball, were guilty of, in opposition to the generality of the Israelites, who had agreed so to do. It was such an instance of presumption, as was practised by those Jews who believed in Christ, and acknowledged him to be the Messiah, against the sentence of the great Sanhedrim, and of those Scribes and Pharisees who sat in the chair of Moses. The same disposition was also the foundation of the reformation of the church of England, and of all Protestant churches. The doctrines and superstitious practices they renounced, being confirmed by many general councils, as agreeable to scripture, or confirmed and handed down to them by catholic tradition, and which all Christians have a peculiar obligation to, as they would not prejudice the purity of the faith, which was once delivered to the saints, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering.

Many points of the Christian doctrine are not mere matters of speculation, in which persons of different denominations are divided in their sentiments; but many of them are equally the concern of all, and will ever remain of such importance, that, till Christians are well acquainted with and confirmed in them, no one can be inexcusable that has opportunities to inquire, to remain ignorant of them. Such in general are the great principles and rules of human conduct; and what is next to it, are those truths of religion, that have a proper rational influence on our conduct, to animate us in the practice of virtue, and deter us from vice. Of this kind are inquiries concerning our own state and circumstances, as reasonable and accountable beings; that God is the moral Governor of his rational creatures; and that there will be a state of futurity, in which will be a righteous retribution, according to men's actions in this life.

* Sermon IV: p. 96, 97, 98.

Obj. 4. Is of a very different nature, viz. That faith has no virtue or true merit in it, because we cannot avoid assenting to particular truths, when the proofs are clearly discerned, and appear to be strong and conclusive; and that we must in all cases believe or disbelieve, just as the evidence appears to our understanding.

A. This is at best a vague superficial objection; for it depends in a great measure upon ourselves, that things appear to our understandings in a true or a false light; if this be owing, as it is almost universally on the one hand, to diligent and mature reflection; and, on the other, to entire neglect or partial inquiry, to criminal prejudices, or strength of corrupt passions; it follows of course, that in all such cases, where our right belief springs from integrity, and the due exercise of our rational powers, and our infidelity or errors from a vicious indulgence and depravity of temper; the one may fitly be rewarded, and the other righteously punished; as fitly indeed as any instances of moral rectitude, or of corruption and iniquity, that can be mentioned *.

*Some OBJECTIONS to the Study of the SCRIPTURES,
particularly considered.*

THE holy scriptures, says St. Gregory, *is, as it were, a letter written by God to man*; and we ought therefore to read it with reverence, to weigh it attentively, and learn the will of God from God himself; to despise or neglect so extraordinary a blessing, were not only an imprudence, but a crime. The reading and meditating on the scripture are, says St. Bernard, a character of our relation to God, Jesus Christ having himself said, He that is of God, heareth God's words. What can we read else that can be more a-

* Dr. Foster of Incredulity, and the Morality of Faith, vol. HI. p. 226 to 230.

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greeable than this book? There is no true and salutary joy, says St. Austin, but that which arises from hope, that hope, most especially, whose object is the kingdom of heaven. Now, the scriptures shew us the way thither, and fill the heart with innumerable secret delights, whilst we walk in it, agreeably to what St. Paul says, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures, our hope becomes more steady and resolved*.

Now, the doctrines and duties of a revelation men must be capable of understanding the sense of so much as is necessary, or else it is a revelation unrevealed; for to suppose that a farther supernatural and inward illumination, is absolutely necessary to give a right and just idea of scripture doctrines, is, in effect, to assert that the scriptures are of no use at all; and that the internal teaching, is the only revelation of the mind of God to mankind. But here again a considerable difficulty occurs, and that is, how we can possibly know that this inward teaching is really divine, but from its correspondence with the external revelation, and with the light and dictates of reason; and consequently without admitting that the external revelation may be understood without it, and that reason is the eternal standard of truth.

But there are a variety of difficulties started, that obstruct the knowledge of the true sense of scripture, which deserve to be taken notice of in this place.

Obj. 1. It is said the New Testament cannot be well understood without the Old, which was for the most part wrote in Hebrew, and for the understanding of which a good knowledge of the oriental language is necessary. That a great part of the scriptures are wrote in a stile extremely figurative; and those figures, such as this part of the world are very great strangers to; and consequently the version of books,

* Lamy's Introduction to the Holy Scripture, Pref. p. 1.

little understood from their language and stile, must be extremely difficult. And if the knowledge of the Old Testament could be dispensed with, the language of the New Testament is not to be understood without much pains. The stile indeed, in the historical part, is plain; yet there are great difficulties in the doctrinal parts. The whole is wrote in the stile adapted to the Jews, and the idiom is Hebrew or Syriac, though the words be Greek, which renders some knowledge of this language the more necessary. I might add, that it requires a good knowledge of the Jewish state, at the time of our Saviour's coming; a knowledge of their government, Sanhedrim, synagogue worship, customs, traditions, opinions, sects, &c. A farther difficulty arises from the sublimity of some of its peculiar doctrines, and the excellency of some of its precepts, as appearing incongruous to their antient maxims, principles, and prepossessions*.

Ans. As to the difficulties arising from the languages, a common critic will make some allowances for the deficiencies and redundancies that might be pointed out in books of such great antiquity, as the books of the Old Testament confessedly are: and when several of those books treat of the same matters, and relate the same facts, a candid reader will supply what appears deficient in one, by what appears compleat in the other; and more especially when we can attain to the general view and design, make the most favourable construction of such as appears harsh and difficult, and content ourselves with being unable to account for some seeming contradictions, as in many cases it may be seen to be an omission in the transcriber. Thus, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. it is written, The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah. And 1 Chron. xxi. 1. it is said, And Satan

* Abstracts from Bishop Hare's Difficulties, &c. that attend the study of the scriptures.

stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel; and God was displeased with the thing; v. 7. therefore he smote Israel. And some of the prophecies of scripture, with their application, seems to stand in need of the same candid comparison of scriptures, and other circumstances, to come at the right knowledge of them. The relation given of some particulars in our Saviour's life and doctrine, are in some minute circumstances differently related by the Evangelists; but in no material and essential points.

Secondly, It is plain the orthodox faith is not founded on a nice and critical knowledge of the scripture; many of the primitive Christians were no great critics, but argued very much in a mystical way. Origen in particular, who was the greatest scholar christianity had bred to that time, perpetually turns the letter of scripture into allegory; from whence we may reasonably conclude, that the knowledge of the pure literal sense was, in the judgment of many, even in those times, thought to be of little use.

But it is certain, that the original language of the Old Testament was known to very few for the first six centuries, in which those general councils were held, wherein all the articles of the orthodox faith were settled; they governed themselves, and determined all their points by the Greek version. Now, if an exact and critical knowledge of the scriptures was not necessary to the settling the faith, it cannot be necessary to the understanding it, or to the understanding those who have wrote in the explication of it: on the contrary, such a knowledge tends to lessen our esteem of the fathers of the church, by discovering their mistakes, and must weaken our regard to the decision of councils, by exposing the falseness of the ground they seem to be built on. A man well skilled in the fathers and councils, will often find texts of scripture are very insufficiently or improperly applied; which suggest

to us another reason why it may seem that such a study can do no good *.

Our learned author likewise enumerates many other arguments against an exact and careful study of the scriptures, as, 1. That the substance of the orthodox faith is comprised in the liturgy and articles of the church of England; which is a short way as could be wished for, knowing all that is necessary to be known, especially as this will lead to the knowledge of all useful truths, without the hazard of falling into any dangerous opinions. 2. As it is a fundamental principle among Protestants, that whatever is necessary to be believed is plainly revealed in the scriptures, and consequently what is not plainly and clearly revealed in them, cannot be necessary: now if what is plain and clear in scripture, is the only part necessary to be known; then a laborious search into the obscurer parts may seem unnecessary, to the obtaining a true orthodox faith. 3. Supposing the study of the scripture to be necessary, that they have been sufficiently studied already, and if any parts remain obscure, who can hope to clear up passages, that have puzzled so many great men, or who will presume to set up his judgment in competition with theirs? 4. That where persons have attempted a free and impartial search into the literal sense of the scriptures, above the rest of the Christian world, they have sometimes purchased their pretended knowledge of the scriptures at the expence of their reputation; and their study has destroyed their orthodoxy, and you will be censured as a heretic, a term which there is a strange magic in; though it has no determinate meaning in the mouth of the people; whilst the orthodox man lives quiet and at ease, unmolested and unenvied †. 5. It is expected that a man should always adhere to the party he has

* Hare's Difficulties and Discouragements, p. 9.

† Our author here mentions two clergymen, and it is natural to conclude he means the reverend Mr. Whiston and Dr. Clark.

taken,

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taken, and that he is all his life bound by the subscriptions made in his first years, as if a man was as wise at twenty-four, and knew as much of scripture and antiquity, as at fifty; and yet if he continues the study of the scriptures, he is not sure he shall continue a year together in the same sentiments. Our author farther enlarges on the danger of dissenting from the established doctrines of christianity, even in those times of toleration: and he concludes with saying, Do not flatter yourself, that temper, prudence and moderation, can, in religious controversies, get the better of indiscreet zeal, bigotry and superstition; in short, be not rash in espousing opinions, which can have no other effect, but to lay the best men at the mercy of the worst. Every mean person, who has nothing to recommend him but his orthodoxy, and owes that perhaps wholly to his ignorance, will think he has a right to trample on you with contempt, and asperse your character with violent reflections, without your having the least hopes of being heard in your own defence.

Our worthy prelates, after these remarks, and more to the same purpose, by way of reprehension of those ministers whose conduct have run counter to their duty and profession, make these candid concessions.

After all that has been said, I am persuaded that many readers will still think what is here advanced, a strange paradox, or perhaps be scandalized at it as a very wicked one; and will on no terms allow, that clergymen should lay aside what ought to be their chief study. And, to be ingenuous, I will confess I am entirely of the same mind; I am as unwilling as they can be, to admit the conclusion, that the study of the scriptures should be deserted; and yet cannot deny, but, humanly speaking, this must be the consequence from the premises. If therefore we will not allow the conclusion, we must show the premises to be untrue, and that this study will not be attended with so

much danger. But this we in vain attempt, if we do not our parts at least, that these may not be the consequences. For as long as they are, the study of the scriptures will certainly continue to be neglected, as it now is, and all men who contribute to these consequences in any degree, do so far discourage the study of the scriptures, whatever they pretend.

In truth, there is nothing more absurd, than to say the glorious things we do daily of the Scriptures; and, at the same time, make the study of them, to men of sincere and honest minds, so extremely hazardous and inconvenient. If then we would not be guilty of discouraging a study, which we acknowledge to be the great duty of the clergy, as we are Christians; if we would be true to the fundamental principles of the reformation, as Protestants, that the scriptures are the only rule of faith; let us use our best endeavours to remove the great obstacles that lie against the study of them; let us do what we can, that learned men may have full liberty to study the scriptures freely and impartially; good encouragement given them to go through the labour and difficulties of such a study, not slightly and superficially, but with such application and diligence as the nature of the thing requires; and have leave to speak their sense with all manner of safety: that their opinions may be examined fairly and with temper: that their names be not unjustly loaded with calumny and slander: that their words and actions may be interpreted with the same candour, as is shown to those that differ from them: that, if what they advance be right, it may be received; if wrong, their errors may be refuted, as the mistakes of learned men on other subjects; if doubtful, and the scriptures say so little, or speak so obscurely, that nothing can certainly be decided either way, that then no body may be obliged to take either side as necessary: that, whether their notions be right or wrong, their persons may in all events be safe, and their

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their maintenance not affected by it: that, as long as they live virtuously, and write with all due modesty, good manners, and advance nothing that breaks in upon morality and government, they be treated in all respects as those are or ought to be who employ themselves in any other part of useful learning.

I must add, let them be never so much in the wrong, I can apprehend no danger from it to the church; or that the errors of a few men, can have any considerable influence in opposition to a great body of a vigilant and learned clergy, who will be always able and ready to defend the received notions, if they can be defended; and if they cannot, it must be allowed they ought not. But if some inconveniences would arise from the liberty I contend for, they are nothing in comparison of those that must follow from the want of it.

Till there is such a liberty allowed to clergymen, till there is such a security for their reputations, fortunes and persons, I fear I must add, till so difficult a study meets with proportionable encouragement; it is impossible a sincere, impartial and laborious application to it, should generally prevail: and till it does, it is as impossible the scriptures should be well understood; and till they are, they are a rule of faith in name only. For it is not the word of scripture, but the sense, which is the rule; and so far as that is not understood, so far the scriptures are not our rule, whatever we pretend, but the sense that men have put on them; men fallible as ourselves, and who were by no means so well furnished, as the learned at present are, with the proper helps to find out the true meaning of scripture. And while we take the sense of the scriptures in this manner upon content, and see not with our own eyes; we insensibly relapse into the principle of popery, and give up the only ground on which we can justify our separation from the church of Rome. It was a right to study and judge of the

scriptures for themselves, that our first reformers asserted with so good effect; and their successors can defend their adherence to them on no other principle.

If then we are concerned for the study of the scriptures, further than in words; if we in earnest think them the only rule of faith; let us act as if we thought so, let us heartily encourage a free impartial study of them; let us lay aside that malignant, arbitrary, persecuting, popish spirit; let us put no fetters on mens understandings, nor any other bounds to their inquiries, but what God and truth have set. Let us, if we would not give up the Protestant principle, that the scriptures are plain and clear in the necessary articles, declare nothing to be necessary, but what is clearly revealed in them.

Then may we hope to see the study of these divine books so happily cultivated by the united labours of the learned, when under no discouragements, that all may in the main agree in the true meaning of them. Places that can be understood, they will agree in understanding alike; such at least as are of consequence to the faith. And for such as are too obscure to be cleared up with any certainty, those likewise they will agree about, and unanimously confess they are such as no article of faith can be grounded upon, or proved from. Next to understanding a text of scripture, is to know it cannot be certainly understood. When the clear and dark parts of scripture are thus distinguished, an unity may then reasonably be hoped for among Protestants in necessary points; and a difference of opinion in such as are not necessary, can have no manner of ill consequence, nor any way disturb the peace of the church; since there will then be nothing left in its doctrines, to inflame mens passions, or feed their corrupt interests, when we are all agreed about what is essential to religion; and what is not essential, is looked on as indifferent; so that a man may take one side, or the other,
or

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or neither, or may change, as he sees reason, without offence.

Upon the whole, a free and impartial study of the scriptures, either ought to be encouraged, or it ought not. There is no medium; and therefore those who are against one side, which ever it be, are necessarily spouters of the other. Those who think it ought not to be encouraged, will, I hope, think it no injury to be thought to defend their opinion upon such reasons as have here been brought for it, till they give better. On the other hand, those who think these reasons inconclusive, and cannot find better, will find themselves obliged to confess, that such a study ought to be encouraged; and consequently must take care how they are accessory to such practices, as in their natural consequence cannot but tend to its discouragement; lest they come into the condemnation of those who love darkness rather than light, and for their punishment be finally adjudged to it. There is in this case no other medium between encouraging, and discouraging, but what there is between light and darkness. Every degree of darkness, is a want of so much light, and all want of light, is a certain degree of darkness. To refuse then a greater degree of light where it can be had, is in truth to prefer darkness; which, in my humble opinion, can never be reasonable or excusable. Those who are of another mind, plainly distrust themselves or their cause. Which if it can bear the light, why should it not be shown in it? but if it cannot, it is not the cause of God, or of the Son of God; for God is light, and in him is no darkness; and the Son of God is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world *.

REMARKS *on what are styled* FUNDAMENTALS.

This is a point I apprehend incapable of being determined, as it must necessarily depend on, and will ever

* Bishop Hare.

vary,

vary, according to the circumstances of persons; and therefore I shall be more concise on this head, and give the reader the sentiments of some eminent authors thereon.

Bishop Usher says, as for the *credenda*, or things necessary to be believed, the Creed, called the Apostles, contained all articles of that kind, as is manifest from the continual practice of the Catholic church. For when she prepared her catechumens for baptism, and thereupon received them to that ordinance, and into the Christian church, we cannot reasonably suppose she omitted any thing to make them members; and yet all that she required of them to believe, were the articles of this creed.

As to the *agenda*, or things necessary to be done, in order to salvation, he says, among all the great differences we see in the practice of Christians, there are certain fundamental points in which they all agree; as, a desire to fear God; repentance for sins past, and a sincere purpose of heart, for the time to come, to cleave unto the Lord; which whosoever have is under mercy, and ought not to be excluded the communion of the faithful Christians*.

With this agrees the doctrine of the church of England, for she requires of those that are to be baptised, only to make confession of this faith†.

Hence the judicious Mr. Chillingworth says, the main questions in this business are, what revelations are simply and absolutely necessary to be proposed to the belief of Christians, so that that society which doth believe them, hath for matter of faith, the essence of a true church. And he quotes,

* Archbishop Usher on the Unity of the Church, p. 15, 28.

† Church Catechism.

‡ Mr. Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants, chap. iv. sect. 13. pag. 196.

See Dr. Potter on the Creed, p. 215.

Bishop of London's second Pastoral Letter; printed in 1730. pag. 15.

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Dr. Potter, who says, that what man or church soever believes the Creed, and all the evident consequences of it sincerely and heartily, cannot possibly (if also he believes the scripture) be in any error of simple belief, offensive to God, nor therefore deserve for any such error to be deprived of his life, or to be cut off from the communion of the church, and deemed unworthy of salvation. And the consequence is this, which highly concerns the church of Rome, that whatsoever man or church does for any error of simple belief, deprive any man so qualified as above, either of his temporal life, or livelihood, or liberty, or of the churches communion, and hope of salvation, is for the first, unjust, cruel and tyrannical, schismatical and presumptuous; and for the second, uncharitable.

Bishop Gibson has delivered his sentiments on this subject with much clearness, candour and charity; he says, as long as men are men, and have different degrees of understanding, and every one a partiality to his own conceptions, it is not to be expected that they should agree in any one entire scheme, and every part of it, in the circumstances, as well as in the things themselves.

The question therefore is not in general about a difference in opinion, which in our present state is unavoidable; but about the very weight and importance of the things wherein Christians differ, and the things wherein they agree; and it will appear that the several denominations of Christians agree, both in the substance of religion, and in the necessary enforcements to the practice of it: "That the world, and all things in it, were created by God, and are under the direction and government of his powerful hand and all-seeing eye; that there is an essential difference between good and evil, virtue and vice; that there will be a state of future rewards and punishments, according to our behaviour in this life; that Christ was a teacher sent from God, and that the apostles were divinely inspired;

inspired ; that all Christians are bound to profess themselves to be his disciples ; that not only the exercise of the several virtues, but belief in Christ, is necessary in order to their obtaining the pardon of sin, the favour of God, and eternal life ; that the worship of God is to be performed chiefly by the heart in prayers, praises and thanksgiving ; and as to all other points, that they are bound to live by the rules which Christ and his apostles have left them in the holy scriptures. Here, says this right reverend prelate, is a fixed, certain uniform rule of faith and practice, containing all the most necessary points of religion, established by a divine sanction, embraced as such by all denominations of Christians, and in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the knowledge and practice of religion in the world.

Professor Turretin, of Geneva, has laid down the following principles to distinguish fundamentals,

I. That we are not under a necessary obligation to know, or believe any truth, but what is clearly revealed unto us, and for the belief of which God hath endowed us with necessary abilities.

II. That he alone who is Lord of life and death, that is, God, has power to determine what is necessary to be believed, in order to obtain salvation ; and what error shall exclude men from it.

III. Those things likewise which flow from these principles, by plain and necessary consequence, must be added to the catalogue of fundamentals, or things necessary to be known.

IV. Fundamentals are plain, adapted to common capacities.

V. They must be few in number.

VI. They must be often and variously expressed in scripture.

VII. They are principles of, or tending to promote piety.

Finally, with respect to ourselves ; our safest way
is

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is to guard against all errors, as though they were fundamental, and to make the utmost progress in the knowledge of divine truths ; but with regard to others, we ought to pronounce nothing indispensibly necessary to salvation, but with the utmost caution, charity and meekness *.

Dr. Foster, in his definition of fundamentals, says, No article can be fundamental, but what is so clearly and distinctly revealed, as that an ordinary Christian, sincere in his inquiries, cannot miss of the knowledge of it.

Secondly, that it is not sufficient that a proposition be clearly revealed to make it a fundamental, but the belief of it must also be made an express term of happiness in the sacred writings †.

1. No doctrine is a fundamental, but what is so plainly and distinctly revealed, as that an ordinary Christian, sincere in his inquiries, cannot miss of the knowledge of it. This may be argued from the perfections of God, and the relations he stands in to mankind : for certainly their kind Creator and Preserver cannot but delight in, and sincerely desire their happiness ; and therefore it is not to be doubted but that he has done every thing to promote it, which is consistent with his illustrious excellence and perfection, and with the wisdom of his government over free creatures. He cannot have fixed it upon such infinite uncertainties, as that they may fail of obtaining it after the most sincere and diligent use of all the means they are capable of using, but must have made it certainly and infallibly attainable by every one who seeks it in the integrity of his heart. What can induce us to think the most good-natured Being in the universe to be such a hard master ? Has there been any want of good-

* Turretin's Discourse on Fundamental Art. p. 22 to 30.

See also Bennet's Irenicum, and Reverend Samuel Bold on church power.

† Dr. Foster's Discourse of Fundamentals, p. 4.

ness in his dispensations towards mankind, which might tempt us to entertain such unworthy and injurious thoughts of him? Again, can he who has been at such amazing expence to redeem the human race from that destruction which their sins had merited, and to raise our nature to its highest perfection of excellence and happiness; who, that he might be just to his being and attributes, and yet justify and save us, delivered up his Son to death for us all; can he, I say, have left it so absolutely precarious, whether poor, illiterate men, (who are the far greatest part of the world) to whom especially the gospel was preached, and consequently to whose capacities it ought to have been peculiarly adapted, shall, doing their best, be happy or miserable? How then can the grand end of the life, death, resurrection, and gospel of his Son be answered? Or finally, has he ever been found false to his word, or failed of the accomplishment of his promises, that his most solemn and sacred declarations of his willingness, that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, should be looked upon as insincere, and he be represented as having promised happiness to the greatest part of mankind, if not upon absolutely impossible conditions, upon conditions next to impossible?

2. It is not sufficient that a doctrine be clearly revealed to make it a fundamental; but an explicit belief of it must be made an express term of happiness in the sacred writings. For, without doubt, there are a great many clear propositions, which many sincere, honest Christians have no explicit belief of: nor is it necessary they should, since they are purely incidental, and occasional; and either do not at all affect christianity in any important points of doctrine, or practice; or if they are of consequence, it is only as they serve to illustrate the essential, fundamental parts of it, which yet may be believed, though they are never observed, or attended to. I grant indeed, that when-

ever

ever a Christian sees them to be clearly revealed, he is obliged to believe them : but then it is not because the points of doctrine are in themselves so important, as that mens salvation, or damnation, will be determined absolutely by their knowledge, or ignorance of them ; but because they are (as he thinks) in the word of God, who is omniscient, and so cannot be deceived himself, just and faithful, and so cannot impose upon his creatures ; and there is still this difference between any of these propositions, and those which are, in the sense above-mentioned, fundamental, that a man may be saved without explicit and particular belief of these ; whereas the others are indispensably necessary to be explicitly believed, as being the essential, constitutive parts of the new covenant.

And now, methinks, it should be past dispute, not only that Christ alone, as sole king of his church, has a right to settle, upon what terms those who are willing to become his subjects, must expect to be protected and rewarded by him ; but that these terms are expressly determined ; and particularly, that our Lord, out of his gracious and kind concern for *his church, which he hath purchased with his own blood, Acts xx. 28.* hath fully and clearly revealed what those truths are, which are of such vast importance, as that the happiness of immortal souls depends upon an explicit belief of them, and which therefore it so nearly concerns all the members of it to be apprized of. So that we may rest satisfied, that whenever this is not expressly said, with relation to any particular doctrine of christianity, misapprehensions of that part of the revelations, which contains it, (if we have examined it with sincerity) will never be brought into the account against us at the day of judgment ; but if we can be charged with nothing else, we shall be able to lift up our heads with joy and confidence in that solemn and awful day of trial, and shall be found perfect and entire, in a gospel-sense wanting nothing.

The

*The Right of FREE INQUIRY and PRIVATE
JUDGMENT.*

Religion is a voluntary thing, and a matter of choice; for mankind are beings endowed with reason and liberty; and this alone makes them capable of religion and virtue. This must be the right of every man who has the free exercise of his reason, the only faculty which God hath given them by which to judge of truth and falsehood, and to discern betwixt good and evil.

What just foundation for praise is there in a man's being of the true religion? a Christian, suppose by chance, without knowing the grounds of his religion, and the reason of his hope, merely because his ancestors were Christians, and christianity is the established religion; upon the same foot he might have been of a false religion, a Mahomedan, or an Idolater.

Religion therefore is only so far praise-worthy as it is the matter of our choice; and since religion is the means of procuring us acceptance with God, it necessarily follows, that every man has an undoubted right to judge for himself *.

Every man must have a right to judge of the true meaning, and the obligation of those laws that come under his notice; and where the laws of an inferior clashes with those of a superior, reason and consciousness will point out the proper deference to the laws of a superior. This alone justifies the separation from any establishment, and destroys the principle of force.

Religious truths, says Bishop Hoadley, is what concerns every one. Religion there can be none, without inquiry; for what is contrary to the first notions of God, established upon the evidences of reason, cannot be admitted by any one who believes a God upon this evidence, because it destroys all those prin-

* Dr. Foster.

ciples of reason itself. What is contrary to the plain design or declaration of the gospel, cannot be received by any one who believes the gospel, because it destroys the authority of the gospel in which he believes. And what is contrary to the fundamental principles of the reformation, without which it could never have been at first, and now cannot consistently be, defended, will not, cannot be received by any true Protestant, because it destroys his very title to that name, and in the very thing which, as a Protestant, he receives *.

None therefore can have any right to impose their particular sense of, or authoritatively explain those articles of faith and terms of salvation, which Christ himself hath made. Our inquiries are to determine our assent to what appears truth, or to be founded upon rational and scripture evidence. This is the Christian's rule, in opposition to the receiving or admitting doctrines upon the foot of human authority; in which respect we are to call no man master upon earth, since he is our master, even Christ. This will evidently appear,

1. From its being inconsistent with the dignity of our Lord Jesus Christ, as head of his church. As such he hath given us laws, and reserved to himself a right of judging our behaviour under them. There is one law-giver, who is able to save or destroy; who art thou that usurpest this authority, and judgest another?

2. It is destructive to the nature of religion, as religion ought to be the result of such conceptions as we are able to form of God, and his laws in our minds: An action indeed may look specious; but if it doth not flow from a real conviction of its excellence, if it be not governed by right motives, it loses both the nature, and reward of a religious action. All the expressions of our piety, of our reverence, and gra-

* Bishop Hoadley's Defence of his Sermon against the Censures of the Committee.

See the Old Whig, or, Consistent Protestant, in two volumes, published in 1735.

titude to God, unless they spring from an inward sense of our obligation, could signify nothing in a right estimation. They could not amount to a reasonable service, because not directed by reason and understanding: to submit blind-fold therefore to the dictates of others, will not consist with the nature of religion. Under this direction it must vary with customs and climates, with prevailing factions, and other incidents of life, i. e. will be just nothing besides a fashionable dress, and an outward form. Neither can we well expect that a religion taken up in such a careless manner should be lasting, when it has no other foundation than that of human authority; it will be liable to be shaken by every objection, and to be given up with as little reason as it was at first received: every little difficulty thrown in the way will be apt to bias an indolent mind to resign it, and the apprehension of one error shall be taken for a presumption of more, till an indifference comes on to all religion. This will, I apprehend, be the case when a profession of religion is founded upon any thing but a full conviction of its truth and importance. When we have examined impartially, and embraced religion upon proper principles, we are most likely to remain steadfast, and hold fast that which is good.

3. An absolute submission of our understanding to the sense, which others put upon the words of Christ, is such a voluntary neglect of those powers and capacities, with which we are endowed, as must incur some degree of guilt: to what purpose have we understanding, reason, and a capacity of distinguishing truth from error, unless it be to direct our choice? Why should we be qualified for moral agency, if we are not allowed to exert it in the most interesting affairs of life, viz. our religion? How much soever we may please men, by being so obsequious and resigned, surely we cannot please God, who will expect us to be and do what he has fitted us for. The account

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we must render at last to our judge, will be a personal one; for every man must give an account of himself to God: there is no pleasing God then by another man's faith and piety, no appearing at our last tribunal by our deputies, we must answer for ourselves, and consequently have a right to direct those measures we are so strictly accountable for. It is an unalienable right, resulting from the very frame of our nature and religion. The apostles, though they enjoyed extraordinary gifts, assumed no such power over the consciences of men; they left them to the free exercises of their own faculties, and commended the Bereans for searching the scriptures, to see what foundation their doctrine had in it*. And St. Paul, in the case of symbolizing with idolaters, appeals to the Corinthians themselves, as capable judges, of what (he said) I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say †; and expressly blames the Colossians, for being subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men ‡. The same liberty they allowed to others, they claimed for themselves; they refused to comply with the injunctions of the council, not to preach any more in the name of Jesus, and herein governed themselves by that important and immutable principle, that they ought to obey God rather than man ||. In this they went upon a principle, which wise men and philosophers have always acknowledged. Socrates declares to his judges, that if they would give him his life, on this condition, that he should teach philosophy no more, he would refuse it: "I love and honour you, O Athenians; but in this I chuse rather to obey God than you §." And Cicero, to the same purpose, says ¶, when our friends expect from us what is not consistent with honour and virtue, we should let them see that we bear a greater re-

* Acts xvii. 12.

† 1 Cor. x. 15.

‡ Col. ii. 20. 22.

|| Acts v. 29.

§ Plat. Apol. Soc. p. 364

¶ Cic. Off. 3. 11. Milner's Religious Liberty asserted, p. 18.

gard to religion than to friendship." It is an avowed maxim, amongst Protestants especially, that a law issuing from an inferior authority obliges not, when it clashes with a superior. This alone can justify a separation from the established church, when it is done upon principles of better information. For since there is a divine law, importing that every man is to take the best care he can of his own soul, and must give an account of himself to God; whoever is verily persuaded that he best answers this end, by worshipping God in a Protestant dissenting congregation, not only may, but is obliged to follow that course, which upon trial he finds most for his spiritual advantage. Again, this condemns those who make the civil law, or the law of the country where they live, the rule of their conscience in matters of right and wrong; for the thing to be considered is not what the law of men permit; but what the law of God, natural or revealed, determines in any case *. So likewise we find that in lawful things St. Paul claimed a right to judge of their expediency in respect to time, or the effect his conduct might have upon others: wherein he declares he would submit himself to the direction and judgment of no man but himself; all things are lawful but one, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any †. This was the principle he went upon both with regard to himself and others; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ‡. Thus the apostles considered the religion of Jesus, as the cause of God and of truth, that needed no colouring to heighten its beauty, no mean arts and disguise to support its influence; they went forth to propagate the gospel, armed with truth, integrity and patience; and preached the gospel with such an open freedom, as shewed they feared no inquiry and examination, that was fair and

* Grove's System, vol. II. p. 112.

† 1 Cor. vi. 12.

‡ Rom. xiv. 5.

impartial;

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impartial ; and ever since we see that christianity hath stood the test, and preserved its credit against all the attempts of art and violence.

Again, an implicit regard to the interpretations and dictates of others is not consistent with that veneration and esteem we ought to have for the holy scriptures. Nothing appears more evident than that they were designed for common use and instruction. This particularity appears from their being written in their then vulgar tongue ; from their address to the common people, and the express acknowledgment of the persons concerned in them. With respect to the Old Testament, our Saviour encouraged the reading of them, and imputed the errors of the Sadducees about the resurrection to their ignorance of the scriptures*. St. Paul asserts, that what were written aforetime were written for our learning†. With respect to the New Testament, St. John declares, that he wrote his gospel, that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ‡; St. Luke his for the instruction of Theophilus§. St. Paul inscribes his epistles to whole churches, and directs that his epistles be read to all the brethren; and enjoins the Colossians, that the epistles he wrote to them and the Laodiceans might be communicated to one another for their mutual comfort||: and St. Peter informs us, that his design in writing his epistles was to stir up the minds of Christians, by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour **. And it is evident from the epistles themselves, that they contain such doctrines as are expressly mentioned in the gospels, or fairly consistent with them, i e. such as we might expect from those who were designed by our Saviour to give a fuller account of his religion. From hence it appears, that the scriptures were design-

* Mat. xxii. 29. † Rom. xv. 4. ‡ John, xx. 31.
§ Luke i. 34. || 1 Thef. v. 17. ** 2 Peter, iii. 12.

ed for common use ; and this evidently implies, that God has revealed his will there with sufficient plainness in all important points, or believe what is more absurd, that he has given us a revelation that wants another to explain it ; and of consequence it must be every man's right to have the free use of the scriptures, and a liberty of judging of the true meaning of them, and of receiving the doctrines and principles of Christianity from an inward conviction and full persuasion of their truth, reasonableness, and excellency, and not received as the effect of chance, custom, interest, implicit faith, or any other motive beneath the dignity of the Christian religion *.

From hence we may reasonably draw some arguments in favour of free and candid debate on matters of inquiry on religion. The great author of nature having given us certain powers and faculties, whereby we are enabled to judge between truth and error, we conceive it is a duty incumbent on us to apply these powers to that generous purpose for which they were designed, especially as we may reasonably expect that this very inquiry after truth should be of some service to us, in order to our advancement in virtue, as it has a most apparent tendency to promote a spirit of integrity and impartiality, and, above all, a spirit of charity. For it should be observed, that there is not only a natural inquisitiveness in mankind, but also a natural sanguineness to support their respective tenets ; and hence, for want of attending to that common right, which every one has of thinking for himself, infinite uncharitableness, harsh censure, morose or shy behaviour, have unhappily prevailed. Now, whatever tends to banish this narrow and unsocial spirit out of the world, must be allowed greatly beneficial to mankind in common. And since the same reasons that prove inquiry reasonable, implies that we ought to use all the means within our power for information, I am inclined

* Consult on this subject Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 225. & seq.

to think every unbiassed reader will admit a free friendly debate is one proper expedient for the acquisition of truth ; especially as oftentimes it affords an opportunity of hearing such objections advanced by our opponents, as we were not only ignorant of before, but often furnish us with the proper answer to those objections, by another hand, which our then present superficial inquiry into that point had not suggested to us. A person, in his ordinary connections and intercourse with others, will sometimes unhappily fall into the company of persons, where he may have his faith perhaps defrauded of its proper supports, by means of some subtil reflections, and probably be hardly able to stand the shock ; whilst the diligent inquirer after truth, from the advantages he has reaped from conversation with the judicious, and frequent debate on the subject of inquiry, will be able to vindicate the cause of truth, and not only answer the subtil objections of his adversaries, but silence, and perhaps convince his opponent. This may be illustrated by an application of it to the right of private judgment, the establishing rational religion in the room of superstition and enthusiasm, but will be found of equal use to ascertain and enforce the genuine principles and duties of our holy religion against sceptics and deists. This will be farther considered under the advantages of free inquiry *.

The reason of man is as little able to stand by itself, or proceed alone through the several branches of useful science, as his personal strength is to defend himself against the violence of every invader ; for both these ends he stands in need of the counsel and assistance of others. The commerce of science and learning is as naturally advantageous for defence, ornament or improvement, as any of the common conveniencies of life. Nature seems to point out to us the necessity of such a communication of knowledge, by distributing to different persons, tastes and capacities for different

* Watts's Improvement of the Mind, p. 124.

inquiries and science, which through the imperfect nature of man cannot be compleated at once, owes its progression to these very causes, that not being obliged continually to renew the labour of invention, we improve upon the stock of others, and daily increase the precious deposit. This is the only patrimony which can descend from one mind to another; and which, whatever it is that we derive from our ancestors, if we are not unjust or idle managers, we shall transmit with fresh improvements to posterity. It is likewise what we impart to others without envy, and grow richer by an exchange of thoughts and conceptions. This communication of our sentiments with each other's, and freely canvassing the various subjects of religion, philosophy and letters, whether by conversation or writing, I call debate and controversy; and affirm it to be the most natural and useful instrument of knowledge*.

Here it may be proper first to take notice of some of the principal ABUSES of FREE ENQUIRY.

It is the observation of Dr. Foster, that there is not a more valuable blessing in human life than liberty. Civil liberty is the basis of all social happiness; and liberty of conscience, the only foundation of a rational religion. When the latter is restrained, we are treated rather like brutes than men, i. e. creatures endowed with moral powers, and accountable for actions: and therefore, it is one of the chief excellencies of the Christian religion, and very far from the air and spirit of an imposture, that it preserves the rights of conscience sacred and inviolable. But, because the world is apt to run into extremes, the writers of the New Testament, like persons who had a thorough knowledge of human nature, have taken care in this respect, as well as in all others, to guard against excess and irregularity. Thus St. Paul advises the Galatians not to

* Library 467.

mistake licentiousness for Christian liberty; or in other words, not to imagine, that because they were freed from the expensive and burthenome observances of the Mosaic institution, which are elegantly described as a state of servitude, they were discharged likewise from moral obligations, which are an eternal and immutable law to all rational beings. I shall enquire into some of the chief abuses of *free-thinking*, by which it happens, that what is really the peculiar honour and greatest advantage of our intelligent nature, becomes a reproach to it, and is attended with most injurious consequences. And,

1. Embracing the principle of liberty, has ended with many in infidelity, or a disbelief of all religion. It is most evident, that infidelity never more abounded than in this age of *free inquiry*: and those who are most loose in their sentiments with respect to the obligations of religion in general, and of Christianity in particular, are, in profession at least, enemies to bigotry and implicit faith. Nay, it may be allowed further, that it is likely they would never have gone such a length as to throw off all religion, if they had continued in a blind attachment to the principles of their education, and to established and popular opinions. Whence now can this arise? We who believe, that religion, in all the parts of it, is strictly rational, can never allow that it is the natural consequence of a free and impartial examination of it; but must suppose, on the contrary, that the more thoroughly it is considered, and the more nicely weighed in the balance of true and unbiassed reason, it will be the more heartily believed and submitted to. This melancholy event may however be sufficiently accounted for from other causes; and that it not only may, but oftentimes does proceed, not from a superior understanding, or more adequate and enlarged views of things, but from ignorance, superficial inquiry, and even from that prejudice and implicit faith, which the monopolizers of reason and free-thinking

thinking so loudly disclaim. I would not be thought, by any thing I am now advancing, to discourage the most rational and free examination of all religious principles, be they ever so sacred and venerable, and transmitted down with ever so much awe and solemnity by our forefathers; nor would I be thought to assert, that any man is obliged to receive a revelation, which, upon mature deliberation, appears to be unworthy of God, and repugnant to the reason and nature of things: for my only design is to point out some false principles, which are all an abuse of the true principle of liberty; and by which it is highly probable, many of the professed admirers, and zealous espousers of it, have been led to a disregard both of revealed and natural religion.

2. Another abuse of the principle of liberty is this, that some men seem to think, that because they have a right to reject all pretended principles of religion, which are contrary to reason, to the perfections of the supreme Being, and the eternal laws of piety and virtue, they may likewise throw off the belief of every thing that they cannot fully account for; and are no more obliged, for example, to believe a Providence, because the visible course of things is perplexed and intricate, full of disorder and seeming injustice, and not such as they imagine it would be, if the universe was governed by an absolutely wise and good Being; than they are to receive such doctrines as assert that God is a rigorous, severe, and inexorable Sovereign, one that delights in the misery of his creatures, and destroys the necessary and unalterable distinction between moral good and evil. This, I say, is another too common abuse of the principle of liberty, leading to a disbelief even of the first principles of natural religion; an abuse that argues great *narrowness* of mind, and is what persons of any *compass* and *freedom* of thought cannot be guilty of†.

† Dr. Foster of the Abuses of Free-thinking, vol. I. p. 127 & seq.

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3. Some again seem to mistake liberty for a right to dispute every thing, and cavil at all religious principles, which are commonly received, merely to shew that they are free-thinkers; the great delight of these people, who are often to be met with, is to puzzle a controversy, and start objections against some point or other of revealed religion; not from a desire of having them *considered* and *solved*, but either to shew their *parts*, or for the sake of embarrassing and distressing weak minds, who having, perhaps, neither capacity nor leisure for close thinking, cannot see through the sophistry of their pretended arguments. Such persons are, generally speaking, the furthest that can be from *freedom* and largeness of mind: for either they will not stay to hear their objections confuted, which is the least that can be expected from a *candid* and *ingenious* spirit; or, if they are gruelled and confounded, make a shift to forget it soon, and repeat the same empty cavils over again to the next company they meet, with as much unconcernedness and assurance as if they had never received any answer to them. Whether these men are really in *sentiment* against religion, or whether they dispute only for their *diversion*, or from a *talkative* humour, or an odd affectation of an uncommon spirit of liberty, I will not take upon me to determine. However this be, they cannot take it amiss, if they are ranked on the side of *infidelity*, because they are always talking against religion, but never defending it.

4. It is an abuse of liberty to prostitute it to the mean and narrow view of a party-spirit. If the right of judging for ourselves was the only concern, why could not men be content to use it for themselves, and encourage the impartial exercise of it in others? But to urge it only with a view to procure attention, and thereby gain an opportunity of starting difficulties, and of recommending a particular set of writers; to urge it on purpose to unsettle mens principles, disturb society, or secure some private ends, this is to act a low ungenerous

ungenerous part. If any thing honourable was aimed at, why could this not be done without abuse? Is it not perfectly absurd to contend for the right of judging for ourselves, and at the same time to reproach those who use that right (and happen to differ from us) with weakness, impartiality, and implicit faith; as if nobody was free, but in a particular way of thinking, and no other evidence could be given of it, but the cavilling at received opinions, and renouncing the principles of Christianity; as if every one was enslaved by priests, who reasoned in favour of the mediatorial scheme, or deserved to be ridiculed, who adhered to his Bible? This is not reasoning, but raving, the true spirit of faction, and the very essence of bigotry. To contend for liberty in this manner is quite to mistake it, and make the plea for it an introduction only to a new and worse servitude*.

5. Another abuse of the principle of liberty is this, that it has led many who have not proceeded so far as a downright disbelief of all religion, to pay no regard, or at most but a slight and trifling regard to *instrumental* and positive duties. But from hence it has been inferred, that the instrumental duties of piety are not only *unnecessary*, but *hurtful*; and that an inward veneration and esteem of the Deity, improved by frequent and serious meditation, is sufficient, without any outward stated acts of worship, and all that is fit for us to perform, or our Maker to expect: but how does this follow, is it a just conclusion, that because superstition and enthusiasm are mischievous things, therefore a rational devotion, that is allowed to have no goodness in it, but as it is subservient to moral purposes, cannot be helpful to us in pursuit of virtue. By no means: To preserve a sense of God and his providence in the world, is a design that I should think ought to be approved by all wise and good men. The giving those publick honours to the Deity, has a direct

† Milner's Religious Liberty asserted.

tendency this way, and is as really the concern of natural as revealed religion : to neglect these publick testimonies of our reverence and gratitude, on a pretence of liberty, doth not imply an exemption from the obligations of the divine authority and law. We then act freely, in every sense of the word, when we act on the side of reason and piety. When we adore the Author of our beings, and aspire in the offices of religion, to a resemblance of his perfect purity and happiness : if this conduct proceeds from an opinion of our superior knowledge and goodness, we must certainly forget what is the present condition of human nature. The best furnished mind, I apprehend, is not so equally attentive in all seasons, as to want no admonition ; nor the strongest virtue so perfect as to be above advice and encouragement. We may therefore infer, that the right of judging for ourselves is not inconsistent with the use of any help or assistance ; nor is instruction imposition, but a suitable means of improving our faculties in the acquisition of truth.

Again, freedom of thought, and impartial inquiry into the principles of religion, have been abused and perverted, in the present age, by degenerating into a light, trifling frame of mind, and a humour of treating sacred things with *ridicule*. With people who affect this way, liberty is nothing else but a free, bold manner of treating all subjects ludicrously, and turning them into a jest. They have a great inclination to shew their wit, especially upon points that afford the least room for it : for this discovers an uncommon genius ; and therefore because religion is the gravest thing in the world, they resolve to be merry with it ; and think it a most meritorious action to laugh at what the generality of the world esteem and reverence, and endeavour to put all the wise and virtuous part of mankind out of countenance. But such empty triflers ought to know, that there can be no true wit which has not reason for the foundation of it ; that ridiculing what is
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in itself good, useful and venerable, fixes a certain reproach upon him that attempts it, either upon his understanding or his morals; that jesting with things of the highest consequence is folly and madness; that it is an easy matter, by misrepresenting, to make any thing appear ridiculous; and consequently, that this talent is so far from being a demonstration that the person who possesses it is a wit, as it is from being an evidence of his good-breeding, that, in violation of all the rules of decency, he banters and treats with scurrility the established religion of his country, and that which all around him have a high value for.

Lastly, the greatest abuse of free inquiry, is when it degenerates into licentiousness, or is the occasion of sin. Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not your liberty for an occasion to the flesh, Gal. v. ver. 13. The apostle had asserted the Gentiles right to the blessings of the gospel, without being under any obligation to submit to circumcision. But when he declared their liberty in one point, he would not have them extend it to every other; that because they were free from ritual laws, they should presently conclude themselves free from moral obligations, and under that pretence run themselves into licentiousness and immorality. No more ought the liberty we claim against the impositions of men, weaken our regards for the commandments for God: no notion of liberty should ever tempt us to break through the obligations of virtue, and the restraint of divine fear: no pretence of reasoning for ourselves, should be carried so far as to reason ourselves out of our religion. This would be a sad case indeed, as it would plunge us into the worst of slaveries, that of sin; and *while they promise themselves liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption*, 2 Pet. ii. 19*.

We shall now take a view of some *advantages of free inquiry*.

* Milner before cited.

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The duty and advantage of free inquiry is necessarily implied in the nature of consciousness, and must be allowed in order to establish to every man the religious privilege of following his own persuasion.

If I have powers and faculties, which render me capable of consideration and reflection, it is an instance or duty of moral virtue, that I should employ my power and faculties for this end and purpose; and the fitness of this instance of moral virtue, consists in this, viz. the certain and evident relation that the having reasonable powers bears to the regular and proper use of them *. And such a faith as is built only on proper and sufficient evidence, must require a greater share of reflection and deliberate inquiry, than where the proofs are such as render conviction and belief necessary; that it argues greater ingenuity and probity of mind; that it has more difficulties to surmount, and stronger prejudices to conquer; that it is in a great measure voluntary, and depends upon our care and application; all which circumstances contribute to render faith a moral virtue †.

The knowledge of religion is without dispute and comparison the most useful knowledge, both with respect to society in general, and to every particular member thereof, as conducing most to the happiness of every individual, as well as the public good; and consequently the study of this knowledge must be of the most importance. Nor can religious truth be at all injured by submitting it to a free and open impartial inquiry ‡, even those which are most difficult and abstruse in their nature; but inquiry will enable us to discover and detect the cunning and sophistry by which they are misrepresented.

It is a natural consequence of inquiry, that it opens the mind, and prepares it for the impressions of truth;

* Dr. Samuel Chandler's *immutable Difference*, p. 291.

† Dr. Foster's *Morality of Faith*, vol. III. p. 228.

‡ See Dr. Lowth's *Visitation Sermon at Durham*, 1758.

for it often happens that it discovers the springs and means of right judgment, and produces a conviction of truths, new, interesting and sublime; he only that seeks and searches after truth sincerely, can with any good reason hope to find it, and that faith which results from inquiry will be the most consistent and stable, as well as the most satisfactory and influencing. The scriptures always represent it as the duty of every reasonable being, even with respect to points of faith, which are the subject of divine revelation, the most sublime in their nature, and the most important as to their end, an employment honourable in the sight of God, and worthy the Christian character.

There is a secret mental pleasure in researches after truth, and establishing our faith upon a solid foundation. This is a sanction which God has annexed to his laws, arising from the very constitution of his nature, so much the more powerful, because it is immediate and constant: this thirst after knowledge, like other appetites increases by being gratified, but with this happy difference, that it increases by being indulged, and the pleasure it leaves behind, is as grateful as the appetite was eager before.

The field of knowledge is large and spacious; there is room enough for every genius to exert itself upon objects suitable to its taste; it helps us to spend our time agreeably, and sweetens the cares of life with many pleasing thoughts and reflections; it is the increase of knowledge that feeds the mind with new and agreeable repasts, and furnishes it with such infinite variety of pleasing views, that time never seems burdensome or tedious; hence it was that Africanus said, he was never less alone, than when alone.

The pursuit and acquisition of truth is a natural and proper means of regulating our passions, and of avoiding those discomposures which are too apt to ruffle and perplex the soul; it tends to introduce a calm serenity of mind, which is itself one of the greatest enjoyments

enjoyments of life, and gives a grateful relish and stability to all our other enjoyments.

A man of an extensive knowledge, the natural result of inquiry, is best qualified to be useful and beneficent to his fellow creatures, to assist them under doubts and difficulties, to set them right with regard to points of real importance, and to inspire them with sentiments of equity, probity, generosity, and love of their country.

Again, the pleasures of conversation, which is one principal means for the acquisition of knowledge, where it is conducted with freedom, friendship, ease, and improvement, is one of the greatest social amusements of which human nature is capable ; but which ever receive an additional satisfaction, as it partakes of all these advantages, which seldom fail to unite, where our own abilities qualify us for imbibing the mental satisfactions, and we are so happy as to converse with those whose dispositions and talents form them for communicating their superior ideas with clearness and perspicuity.

It was a free and candid inquiry that at first introduced the reformation, and gave it such remarkable success, progress, and establishment, freed us from many of the gross errors and ridiculous ceremonies of the church of Rome ; and hence the duty and advantages of free inquiry was always recommended by the first reformers as the basis and support of liberty and truth ; judging very rightly, that ignorance can never be the mother of devotion in any religion, which is a reasonable service.

Error, superstition, and bigotry, can never be rooted out but by persuading men to look upon themselves as rational creatures, and to implant in their minds rational notions of religion. Religion there can be none without a moral difference of things, a moral difference of things there cannot be where there is no place for action, and action there can be none without liberty*.

* Dr. Clarke's remarks on the Phil. Inquiry concerning Human Liberty, p. 45.

A free and impartial inquiry after truth, wherever it is to be found, is indeed a noble and most commendable disposition; which every man ought himself to labour after, and to the utmost of his power encourage in all others. It is the great foundation of all useful knowledge, of all true virtue, and of all sincere religion. But when a man in his searches into the nature of things find his inquiries leading him into such notions as, if they should prove true, would manifestly subvert the very essences of good and evil, the least that a sober-minded man can in such a case be supposed to owe to God, to virtue, to the dignity of a rational nature, is, that he ought to be in the highest degree fearful and suspicious of himself, lest he be led away by any prejudice, lest he be deceived by any erroneous argument, lest he suffer himself to be imposed upon by any wrong inclination.

Our author concludes, that all sincere lovers of truth, and liberty of free and impartial examination, are under the highest obligations, in reason and conscience, always to make use of that freedom which we so greatly esteem, and so justly boast of, in such a manner only as may give no occasion for superstitious men, and lovers of darkness, to endeavour to retrench that liberty of inquiring after truth, upon which all valuable knowledge, and all true religion, essentially depend.

Of the Disadvantages of IGNORANCE and ERROR.

It is the opinion of a late philosopher, and I think pretty generally received, that the mind of man is at first but a fair unwritten paper, till it has received some impressions from without, and improved upon them by its faculties of reflection; and consequently that it is only wisdom and instruction that fills it with fair and excellent characters; that write things upon it in their natural shape and order; that draw them to the
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the life in their true colours and posture; and describe upon it the greatest concerns that are or have been in the world; and, by their means, it becomes a delightful storehouse of the richest truths and most valuable knowledge.

Reason is the great perfection of human nature; but, like a diamond, it is naturally rough till education polishes it, and sets it well; and as nothing is so perfective of our beings, so much worth our care and endeavours, as a wise and well-improved mind; so a defect of reason and understanding is looked upon as one of the greatest blemishes of human nature. Nay, many had rather you impeach their morals than their wisdom and understanding; and what is wisdom and understanding, but a mind with true conceptions and lively ideas, stored and enriched with the knowledge of the best things, the opening it to the noblest truths? in letting it see and behold all things that God and nature hath set around it, and making useful improvement by proper reflections upon them?

Errors may be considered as more or less criminal; as they are in a higher or lower degree voluntary; and all error is voluntary where the causes of it are voluntary; as, in the first place, imperfect and superficial inquiry, which is evidently unbecoming reasonable creatures, who ought in all points of importance, in which their highest interest are concerned, to proceed with the utmost caution, or not to act with rashness and presumption; or, 2dly, Absolute indifference and inattention, which directly opposes the original design of our peculiar and more noble faculties. But, 3dly, The causes of religious error may sometimes be pride, prejudice, obstinacy, or sensual passions, darkening and controuling the judgment, and often biasing the will to evil.

But this is to be understood with much restriction and limitation. I am sensible the causes of error are frequently involuntary. Many are under great disadvantages for want of abilities, leisure, or opportunity,

and other proper and necessary helps for the acquisition of knowledge; and many, I am well satisfied, have made very considerable improvements under great discouragements and difficulties, which, where-ever it happens, redounds much to their reputation.

There are a great number of other persons, who readily acknowledge a fitness and propriety in being acquainted with religious subjects; but perhaps they have more darling studies that engage their thoughts, ingross their affections, and employ their time. Perhaps the ear has been captivated with music, or the mathematics better suited to their genius; or, they have made choice of some other learned professions, upon which to employ their future studies: and they have for this reason bid adieu to whatever is not in their nature subservient to them.

I would by no means undervalue other sciences, or speak of them in diminutive terms; but then an inquiry after truth, and judging for ourselves in matters of religion, may certainly throw in its claim, and support its right to a part of our time, upon all the principles of solid reason, and the most substantial interest. For, as an ingenious author observes †, “If by the faculties we enjoy, we are so greatly advanced above the brute creation, our ideas, our pursuits, ought to bear proportion to those superior capacities with which we are distinguished from them; and how industrious should we be to improve every opportunity, is evident from their uncertainty. What trifles are apt to divert us, in comparison of those pursuits, so infinitely preferable. To employ our time therefore as mere humour or fancy suggest, without a regard to a rational improvement, is an imputation of folly, as it prefers an imaginary to a real pleasure and advantage. In how many particulars may we be of service to ourselves? how much depends upon our endeavours? and therefore nothing less than the employment of our time, and our opportunities, in making attainments

† Employment of Time, p: 64.

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thus desirable, can be consistent with a sense of its real benefit and lasting importance.

Some proper Rules to direct our INQUIRIES after TRUTH.

We have seen that there are truths of different natures, and evidences of different kinds and degrees; and it is no small proof of the dignity of human nature, that, by the use of those faculties with which we are endowed, we are enabled to compare propositions that differ, and investigate many truths which do not appear obvious at first sight.

This naturally suggests to us, that there are different methods to be pursued for the attainment of truth, according to their different natures, and the evidences of which they are capable *. And tho' the evidence of our senses is the most natural, and in some cases incontestible, yet it is also certain, that there are many propositions, of which there is a reasonable and sufficient moral evidence of their truth †.

Some of the rules and directions necessary to direct our inquiries, are as follow :

1. An humble and sincere address to the great Author of your being, for his favourable assistance and concurrence with you.
2. Propose to yourself as the only design of all your reasonings and inquiries, to find out truth.
3. Examine all the circumstances of the case proposed, in the most careful and deliberate manner that you can. Rash conclusions, without duly weighing the reasons upon which they are founded, and what evidence there may be on the opposite side, is the reproach of intelligent nature.
4. Make such inferences from them as your sober

* With respect to the matter of Divine Revelation, as well as Human Testimony, consult Dr. Watts's Logic.

† Ditton on the Resurrection of Christ, from page 123 to 194 of Moral Evidence in general.

reason, without any art or management, does itself freely prompt you to make.

5. Never drop the inquiry till you have brought it to some determinate issue.

6. Let your persuasion be unprejudiced, free as possible from prepossession, and an undue attachment to the sentiments of others, tho' under the sanction of public authority. Nothing ought to be the governing predominant principle to direct our inquiries, but the evidence of its being the mind and will of God: and in judging of points of faith, that depends on the authority of the inspired books, the expressions taken from the scriptures should be made the measure of interpreting such as are not taken from the scripture, and not the contrary.

7. Though you are not to pay an implicit regard to the opinions and sentiments of others, we may in many cases lawfully and prudently consult men of wisdom and years, observation and experience, in order to assist our inquiries, both in points of a civil, moral, and religious nature*.

There are, says Dr. Watts†, five eminent means or methods, whereby the mind is improved in the knowledge of things; and these are, *observation, reading, instruction by lectures, conversation and meditation.*

Observation is the notice that we take of all occurrences and concerns of human life, whether they are sensible or intellectual, whether relating to persons or things, to ourselves, or others: all things which we see, which we hear, or feel, which we perceive by sense or consciousness, or which we know in a direct manner, with scarce any exercise of our reasoning powers, may be included under the general name of observation.

* Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 231, & seq. See likewise Grove's Moral Philos. vol. II. p. 59 & seq.

† Improvement of the Mind, p. 30. illustrated by a variety of Rules and Directions, from p. 60 to 211.

Reading is another and very considerable means or method of knowledge, whereby we acquaint ourselves with what other men have written or published to the world in their writings; by this means we partake of the sentiments, reasonings, and improvements of all the learned world, in the most remote nations, and in former ages, almost from the beginning of mankind.

Conversation is another method of improving our minds; wherein, by mutual discourse and inquiry, we learn the sentiments of others, as well as communicate our sentiments to them in the same manner, sometimes between a teacher and learner; but the profit is frequently mutual. Under this head we may also rank disputes of various kinds.

Public or private lectures, are such verbal instructions as are given by a teacher, while the learner attends in silence. Thus religion is learnt from the pulpit-philosophy, or theology from the professor's chair, mathematics by a teacher, &c.

Meditation, or study, includes all those exercises of the mind, whereby we render all the former methods useful for our increase in true knowledge and wisdom. It is by meditation we come to confirm our memories of things that pass through our thoughts in the occurrences of life, in our own experiences, and in the observations we make. It is by meditation that we draw various inferences, and establish in our minds general principles of knowledge. It is by meditation that we compare the various ideas which we derive from our senses, or from the operations of our souls, and join them in propositions. It is by meditation, that we fix in our memory whatsoever we learn, and form our own judgment of the truth or falshood, the strength or weakness of what others write. It is meditation or study that draws out long chains of argument, and searches and finds deep and difficult truths, which be or lay concealed in darkness.

It would be a needless thing to prove, that our own

solitary meditations, together with the few observations that the most part of mankind are capable of making, are not sufficient of themselves to lead us to the attainment of any considerable proportion of knowledge, at least in an age so much improved as ours is, without the assistance of conversation and reading, and other proper instructions that are to be attained in our days; yet each of these five methods have their peculiar advantages, whereby they assist each other, and contribute to increase our knowledge.

But it is time to apply the *preceding remarks* to the *subsequent history*.

As Protestants and Dissenters from the church of Rome, we are obliged to admit the right of private judgment, in opposition to our receiving any thing for true on the credit of the Pope as intallible judge, or (as others of that communion express themselves) on the judgment of the Pope, in conjunction with a council of bishops; and if this is not admitted, how can we justify the conduct of our principal reformers? Did they dissent without inquiring? and, if they made free to examine for themselves, did they not, by necessary consequence, assert the right of every man to do the same for himself? And if this be done with care and sincere veneration for truth, if we honestly endeavour to avoid every error, we may be assured, whatever may be the result of our inquiry, we shall not at the bar of God stand chargeable with voluntary ignorance and criminal mistake.

One principal part of our inquiry, as Protestants, is, how we shall strip Popery of its strongest bulwark, the pretended infallibility and authority of the church, explode their pretended miracles, and vindicate the principles of Protestantism against all their attempts to blacken and vilify it; vindicate the authority of Scripture as the rule of a Christian's faith and worship, in opposition to tradition; point out their various inventions and superstitions in worship and discipline; shew the novelty and absurdity of many of their ceremonies;

monies ; display the absurdity of their pretended doctrines of transubstantiation, the gross presumption of absolution, and the immoral tendency of indulgences ; and, above all, convince them of the repugnancy of persecution to the spirit and practice of genuine Christianity : and, to do this the more effectually, acquaint yourself with the most authentic proofs of their gross corruptions ; the commencement and confirmation of them from the best historians of their church ; the decrees of councils and synods ; and be able to prove the hypotheses you advance by unquestionable authorities : for they will roundly deny, or artfully evade, whatever they are not qualified to vindicate ; and despise the proofs brought by Protestants, however well supported. 'Tis, methinks, a laudable acquisition to be able well to defend and support the Christian religion against the subtilty and artifice of those enemies of our holy religion ; and though I cannot point out in what part of England it is at present prevailing, Ireland abounds with them ; and I am well informed, that in some counties of England their numbers are very considerable, which should animate Protestants to be upon their guard against the delusive spirit of popery.

A late worthy prelate observes *, " That popish superstition is a more active principle, with regard to conquest, than rational protestantism. The first piques itself on destroying and extirpating the enemies of God ; the latter, regarding none as the enemies of God on account of error, aims only at a rational defence. While protestantism therefore retains its proper influence in the minds of men, it may be a match for popish superstition ; what it wants in fury, it makes up in steadiness. This truth our forefathers have twice experienced in our own country." However, he concludes, upon the whole of such arguments, that protestantism calmly presents herself to the reason, while popery seizes the passions of men ; and hence modern

* Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times.

popery,

popery, set against modern protestantism, is in danger of overwhelming it.

With regard to our own country, the same author remarks, that the principles of protestantism have lost their influence or ruling-power; inasmuch that it is no injustice to the higher ranks of this kingdom to say, that the main security of the church ariseth from its alliance with the state. There is now among the Great such a general indifference and supineness in, not to say contempt of, every thing that regards religion only, as may well alarm those few who look forward to posterity. How different a state of religion is this from that which prevailed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when, as Bolingbroke observes, the reformation was established, not only in the outward form, but in the hearts of men!—How different from that which prevailed at the grand period of the abdication of James II. when protestant principles took the lead even of the spirit of civil liberty, and effected the most glorious revolution that history hath yet recorded; a revolution that might justly be stiled religious rather than political. That great religious spirit, which at those illustrious periods shone so bright, is now, as it were, quenched in darkness!

Popery advances with dreadful strides in America, while protestantism lies as it were indolent and inactive; and he asserts, that on the continent of Europe, the Protestant crowns are divided one against each other. The popish crowns unite in open and secret confederacy. The Empress Queen has thrown off the mask, and basely deserted those who had long and often saved her from destruction. France is pursuing its old game, and following its established plan of power, and is as tenacious of the popish doctrines and practices, as is subservient to it; and, if Voltaire may be credited, theism is generally prevailing*. Their sentiments are dispersed thro' all religions, both abroad and at home, looking on the

* Voltaire's Discourse on Theism.

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law of nature only as religion, and regarding the external form of religion, however it may be agreeable to the prescribed rules of the Christian revelation, as insignificant. The manifest inference is this, as it appears that the genius of popery is active, insinuating, furious, permanent, and unalterable; the genius of protestantism, calm, rational, indolent, fluctuating; at the same time the enemies of Christianity are artful, insinuating, and vigilant, to oppose its genuine doctrines; Protestants ought to be more watchful in the preservation of the invaluable privileges they enjoy, and be active in the support of them, by endeavouring to support those whom, next to God, are its bulwark and defence. It was observed by the late bishop of London, in his sermon on the last rebellion, that we are apt to boast of the purity of our religion, and our reformation from the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, and to flatter ourselves we are the peculiar people of God, and set up by providence to be the bulwark of the Protestant religion. “But remember still, says his lordship, that we are chosen to profess the truth of God’s holy gospel, and to bear our testimony against the corruptions which have prevailed over great part of the Christian world. Let us therefore set a true value upon the blessings that are bestowed on us, and walk worthy of the light of the gospel, which has shone upon us, that our conduct and behaviour may bear testimony to the truth we profess.”

Another great point of our inquiry should be, the defence of the Christian religion against the bold attacks or secret insinuations of DEISTS; and it is now pretty well known, that their chief strength lies not so much in opposing the scripture-doctrine, as those misconstructions which some professors of christianity themselves have put upon it. And in this point it behoves us to call off unbelievers from their false ideas, and give them to understand the true state of the controversy between them and us, which is too often overlooked

looked by the professed writers on that side of the question. And in proof of this I need only refer my reader to *Christianity as old as the creation*, and to a later book, called *Christianity not founded on argument*.

It is a truth that I believe few will deny, however to be regretted (in a land of so much learning, and where the Christian religion has been so well defended) that infidelity or deism has become fashionable; and this is by no means owing to the cogency of their arguments, but rather to the pains they take in making profelytes; for which they trust not to books alone for propagation of their opinions, but that in conversation they will (and actually do) endeavour to seduce others; the success of which if possible should be prevented by the abilities and assiduity of professed Christians; and whilst they cavil at revealed religion, it is our business to put them to the proofs, that mere natural religion contain more essential, fixed, and permanent principles, and as such a wiser and better system; call upon them likewise to shew that they have more substantial motives to virtue, supported upon better evidence. Many of them at least hesitate about a future state; others discard the notion of it, and many of those who profess to believe in a future state, are in great perplexity and uncertainty about the nature and duration of the happiness or misery which will be assigned to the virtuous or the wicked. We may easily demonstrate to them, that the evidences of the sanctions of the Christian religion are not so precarious and uncertain; that we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we shall do well if we take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, 2 Pet. i. 19.

I have occasionally mentioned many of our eminent prelates and divines, whose defences of christianity have done honour to their names, their country and their religion, and sufficient, a Christian would readily imagine, to satisfy every unprejudiced opponent. But if this is not so, something more becomes our duty; we
are

are not to give up with indifferency the great articles of our holy religion; but, as far as in us lies, shew ourselves always ready, and always able to confute their strongest arguments, and explode their ludicrous cavils.

But it would be no difficult matter, if we would give ourselves time to deliberate on the natural consequences of some of their tenets, such as the doctrine of materiality, that God is nature, nature God, &c. to shew that deism, of which this is one of their favorite sentiments, has a direct tendency to sap the foundation of our happy constitution, both in church and state, and directly repugnant to the established and tolerated religion, and municipal laws of this kingdom, and particularly in the teeth of an act of parliament, now in force against prophaneness and immorality, made not only since the reformation, but also since the revolution, and toleration of liberty of conscience, by confessedly a number of as wise men, and great abilities as ever graced a senate. See 9 & 10 of K. William III. Sess. 20. cap. 32 *.

But besides those peculiar obligations to acquaint ourselves with the principal arguments, in defence of the Christian religion, against the objections of modern deists, and on every proper occasion to vindicate the excellency and authority of the Christian revelation, the scripture not only requires that every man be fully persuaded in own mind, but that he is able to give an account of the faith that is in him, with meekness and fear, and reason coincide with it, as it is not only the just foundation of our stability in the Christian principles, but a conscious evidence of our having embraced them upon suitable authority.

Those who make profession of the religion established by law, ought at all times, not only to be acquainted with the principles of that religion, but at the same time

* P. S. We shall have occasion to treat of the different sentiments of deists in another place.

be able to offer something pertinent, and convincing that they have not undertaken that profession in compliance to established articles only; but from their appearing to be founded on arguments more substantial and influencing, such as to them appear agreeable to the sacred scriptures, which is allowed the standard of truth to all protestants, according to the sixth article of the church of England, and many of the canons of that church. This may be applied to the principal doctrines contained in their articles, discipline, mode of worship, ceremonies, &c.

To such as profess to differ from the established religion, it behoves them in a particular manner to shew: the reasonableness of their separation, that no false bias, no contempt of the authority of the legislator, a love of singularity or novelty, but a thorough conviction that the tenets they profess are more agreeable to Scripture and reason; that the worship they engage in is more simple, spiritual, and edifying; that the discipline practised in those churches is more conducive to the purity of faith, the regularity of conduct, and the peace and good order of society. If the tenets or principles of that society of which they profess themselves members, though few in number, are the peculiar characteristics of that society or denomination, it becomes them more especially to be able to shew their significance and importance, as having their immediate foundation in the sacred writings, and therein declared to be of indispensable obligation *.

I shall leave the reader to make the most candid application of these particulars, according to his own abilities and circumstances, and shall conclude with an *Address* to the *British Youth* of both Sexes.

You are favoured with great advantages and opportunities for the attainment of Christian knowledge, and enjoy the glorious privilege of religious liberty. Beware of a trifling indifference with respect to reli-

* See Remarks on Fundamentals.

gion ; and as your minds are susceptible of many impressions, let them be stored with religious truths, founded on just and rational principles ; trace the great doctrines of the Christian institution in their genuine nature, tendency, and effects, as contained in the New Testament, and with that candour and impartiality as becomes a diligent inquirer in matters of the most momentous concern ; and when the evidences of the truth of evangelical doctrines are maturely weighed, I persuade myself they will appear worthy of all acceptance, and the preceptive part be approved as the most perfect scheme of religion that was ever afforded to mankind, and enforced by the most excellent motives. In fine, religion will appear your highest wisdom, your truest, and most lasting interest ; which, that I may recommend in the most elegant and persuasive manner, I shall close with the words of Dr. Clarke *.

“ If wisdom consists in studying those things which are of the greatest use and necessity for us to know ; if it be wise for us to employ our thoughts about things in their own nature the most excellent, and in their relation to us of the utmost importance ; if it be wise to pursue the noblest ends, and in the pursuit thereof to use the best and properest means ; if it be wise to consult our own real happiness, and to be more concerned for the improvement of our minds in practical knowledge, than for amusing them with vain and empty speculations ; if eternity be of more importance than time, and a never-ceasing duration than a transitory moment ; if the favour of God be infinitely more valuable than the friendship of the world ; if joy and satisfaction of mind be truly more desirable than doubt and anxiety ; if it be wiser to promote the happiness of society, by encouraging peace, charity and universal good-will ; then that men should make each other miserable without cause, and without end, if wisdom

* Dr. Clarke's Sermons, vol. II. ser. vii. p. 146.

consists

consists in knowing and distinguishing, in chusing and adhering to whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, pure, and of good report; things that make our present enjoyments easy, and the remembrance of what is past comfortable, and the hopes and expectations of what is to come secure; then is religion man's truest wisdom, for where are these things to be found, but in the practice of virtue and true religion?"

THE



THE
HISTORY
OF
RELIGION.

CHAP. I.

Of the promulgation of Christianity. The establishment of churches, particularly of the church of Rome: containing the most remarkable transactions of that church, and the variations in the constitution, doctrine, worship, and ceremonies thereof, for seventeen centuries.

CENTURY THE FIRST.

WHEN man was sunk into ignorance and superstition, and there were scarce any remains of the uncorrupt religion of nature; when the powers of reason and philosophy were either not employed, or their efforts proved ineffectual to recover mankind to the knowledge of the one true God, the maker and governor of the universe, and to give them just and worthy notions of his perfections and providence, and the worship due to him. To restore religion to its native purity and lustre; to settle morality and the social virtues upon their true and native foundation, and to give divine laws a proper sanction and influence, the supreme God and Father of all,

Vol. I. Numb. I. B who,

who, at sundry times, and by divers methods of divine revelation, spake unto the fathers by the mouth of his holy prophets, did, in the fulness of time, and in the riches of his grace, speak unto us with peculiar authority and excellence by his own Son.

This great event was predicted by many ancient prophecies, and ushered in with seraphic joy; an angel proclaiming his advent with repeated *Hallelujah! Glory to God in the highest! on earth, peace and good will towards men!*

This event came to pass in the reign of the emperor Augustus, which, with the consequent fall of heathenish idolatry, and the conversion of the Gentiles by the preaching of the gospel, was as amazing a revolution as ever happened in the world, and is with propriety stiled the Christian *Æra* or *Epocha*.

When the kingdom of the Messiah approached, John the Baptist was appointed and sent by God, to preach and exhort his hearers to repentance, and to forsake every course of vice, and thereby to prepare their minds for the reception of that dispensation, and the fit subjects of that kingdom, in which eternal and immutable righteousness should be chiefly and ultimately recommended.

And when, in divine wisdom, our Lord was baptised and entered on his public ministry, we find his doctrines suitable to the dignity of his character and mission, and to the excellent and important end of his coming; of which it may be necessary to give a general account.

Jesus Christ, the great author and founder of the Christian faith, not only explained and inculcated the great principles and duties of natural religion, spiritual adoration, purity and integrity of heart, unblameableness of life and conversation: The essence of all which he declares to be love intensely towards God, and extensively towards men, included in living soberly, righteously, and godly.

Natural religion.

moderately.* But he lays open, by his public ministry, his divine character and mission, confirmed by incontestable proofs, in order to awaken the attention of mankind, and engage them upon a rational conviction to become his disciples and followers*; in order to which he taught and instructed his audience, what were the great principles and duties of his gospel — repentance towards God, and faith in him, as the Son of God, and the only mediator between God and man — strictly enjoining an unfeigned, impartial, uniform, and persevering obedience, an entire submission to his laws, as necessary to constitute us christians, the subjects of his kingdom, and entitle us to the privileges and rewards promised in his gospel. This is called, the doctrine according to godliness §.

Gospel doctrine.

Jesus Christ having thus begun to establish his kingdom, and prescribe rules to his subjects and votaries, in order the better to answer the important purposes of religion, recommended, and enjoined, their uniting together in communities for public worship, and the increase of their knowledge and virtue. He likewise instituted two rites, commonly called Positive institutions, to be observed, viz. baptism and the Lord's supper; the former as a rite whereby they were publicly to profess their discipleship to him ||; the latter, as a memorial of his death †, which he was shortly to submit to, in obedience to the living will, for their salvation ‡; and that he should rise again as the pledge and assurance of the resurrection

* Rational Catechism, p. 59.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 3. See also Tillotson's Sermons, Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, Lawrences's Christian Morals and Christian Evidence, Dr. Chandler's and Dr. Foster's Defence of the Christian Revelation.

|| See Foster's Truth of the Christian Revelation, p. 310. Hoade's Plain Account. Whitby's Paraphrase on Rom. vi. 4.

† Lawrence's Christian Morals, vol. 1. Dr. Clark's Essay on baptism.

‡ Grotius' Annot. on Matt. xix. 14.

of all men, and of the infallible accomplishment of the promises of reward, or denunciation of future punishment, which were the sanction of his gospel ||.

It was Christ's appointment, that people should first be proselyted and gained to profess themselves his disciples; then to be admitted to outward communion; and then were further taught and required, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded, these constituted the members of Christ's church. And without a supplement to the New Testament, proof will be wanting, that Jesus Christ hath vested any with authority to alter or make void his original institution*.

And if we examine the writings of the New Testament, we shall find that one end and design of our Lord, in laying a foundation for those friendly societies, was, that his disciples being united, and living under the power and influence of his gospel, might be actuated by a friendly and brotherly affection, to encourage, support and comfort each other under every difficulty, and, by a good example, to provoke one another to love and to good works.

Another valuable purpose intended to be answered hereby, was, that those societies might be lights to the world, become public examples of virtue, and thereby recommend the gospel to more general acceptance. Christian societies are intended to be like a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid; that is, they are intended to be a collection of persons, who for their plainness and simplicity, their justice, honesty, and integrity; their modesty, temperance, and sobriety; their peaceable, and quiet, their loving, friendly, and benevolent behaviour, may be an evidence of the blessed effects of the gospel of Christ.

|| Fisher's Christianismus Redivivus.

* The Rev. Mr. Samuel Bolde's Thoughts on Church Authority, p. 96.

This is indisputably evident from the general tenour of our Lord's discourse in his excellent sermon on the mount; and from thence we find what our Lord means, by believing in him; not a bare assent to the truth of this proposition, that Jesus is the Christ; but he

*True Nature
of faith in
Christ.*

means by it, the attending to that message which he was sent to deliver to the world, and the conforming our minds and lives according to it: and having thus shewn what temper and behaviour his disciples and followers ought to put on, he represents to them the mighty consequence of such temper and actions. Mat. vii. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in Heaven.* And our Lord, ver. 24, 25, says, *Therefore, whoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock;* hereby intimating, that it was the Christians best security in times of trial, not merely professing Christ, or giving him the highest appellation, nor even prophesying in his name, would recommend them to the rewards promised in his gospel, without a temper of mind and course of life conformable thereto.

To believe in, and submit to be governed by the laws of Christ, are what denominate a Christian, and contract the relation betwixt him and them, and which constitute him the head, and they the members of his body; so that Christians, as Christians, have no other head, that is, they have no other authoritative power or governor over them, but their one common head or governor, viz. Christ Jesus, our Lord; they have no other law, considered as christians, but the laws of Christ to direct their behaviour by.

From hence we see what is to be understood by the term universal or catholic church, viz. *Catholic Church defined,* that it includes all those who, throughout the face of the whole earth, profess faith in

Christ, and acknowledge him to be head and lord of all, and submit to him as such †. Thus Irenæus speaks of the church dispersed throughout the whole world.

The church of Christ, or the kingdom of Christ, is the number of men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are subjects to Jesus Christ alone, as their lawgiver and judge, in matters relating to the favour of God, and their eternal salvation †. From hence it is plain wherein the unity of faith, at this time, did consist. Not in an uniformity of rites and customs, in which the eastern and western churches greatly differed; but in an harmonious assent to the essential and fundamental doctrines ||.

Christ is therefore represented as the Christian's pattern, an excellent and worthy example of every good word and work. Christ preached his own life, and lived his own doctrine, and thereby he was at once a standing monument of the practicableness of virtue, and of the present peace and happiness that flows from it; in him we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit of modesty and uprightness, of benevolence and charity towards men, and of devotion and piety towards God, in which, so far as his disciples are careful to imitate their lord and master, they would recommend his doctrines to the world.

Christ did not lay a foundation by his doctrine, or encourage by his example, that, among his Disciples and followers, some should be singled out from their brethren, to be possessed of great revenues, live in stately palaces, wallow in luxury and ease, and lord it over those by whose labours they are maintained, placed on thrones, or garnished stalls, and seats of honour, assuming and exercising dominion over their

† King's Primitive Church. p. 2.

† Hoadly's Nature of the Kingdom of Christ, p. 7.

|| See King's Primitive Church, p. 158.

brethren; and that others should be subject to them; bow down to them, and call them Rabbi ! Rabbi ! as though they were invested with divine authority and infallibility, that, on the contrary, he has strictly forbid it, Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27, 28. *But Jesus called them* (viz. his disciples) *unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, chap. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father, upon the earth; for one is your father, which is in heaven; neither be ye called master, for one is your master, even Christ*.*

As Christ proposed his own example for his followers to imitate; so, in a particular and special manner, he recommended humility, and gave them an example of his own great condescension, in performing the meanest office to his disciples, in the instance of washing their feet, which is related at large, and with the plainest injunction to his disciples, to go and do likewise, John xiii. 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

But as our Lord foresaw, from the most probable circumstances, that there would be some difference of sentiment, some whose principles and conduct would contradict the genuine simplicity of his gospel, he left some farther directions, by which his disciples should regulate their conduct to-
*Persecution
unchristian.*
 wards each other, under those circumstances; and in the strongest terms recommends love to one another, as the criterion, or characteristic of their discipleship to him, John xiii. 35. and forbids rash judging and cen-

* See Dr. John Gale's Sermons (vol. I.) on this Text, Mr. Samuel Bolde's Thoughts on Church Power, and Hoadly's Answer to the Committee.

furing one another, as inconsistent with that character, and enjoins them to *be at peace among themselves*, as they had professed to acknowledge but one master, and to be united by that profession as brethren, Matt. vii. 1. Mark ix. 5. and Matt. xxiii. 8.

And as if our Lord had particularly intended to guard all those who called themselves his disciples, against persecution for conscience sake, and of destroying mens lives under the pretence of promoting the cause and interest of his gospel, he strictly commands that the tares and the wheat grow together till the harvest.

Jesus Christ hath likewise given Christian societies some cautions and directions, with respect to their devotions, Matt. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathens do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking; be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this manner therefore, pray ye. Our Father which art in heaven, &c.* Whether we consider this as a form of prayer, or only as a guide and a direction to Christian societies, with respect to the object and the subject of their prayers, the dispositions and qualifications of the persons praying, and the grounds of their acceptance with God, it comes to the same, because the same useful instructions are held forth in either case. Here Christians are taught to direct their prayers to God the Father, whose paternal kindness disposes him to do more abundantly for his dutiful children than they can ask or think.— Another encouraging motive to prayer, which our Lord gave to his disciples, was, that they should ask the Father in his name, John xvi. 23. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you;* hereby assuring them that God the Father had dignified his own Son, by the acceptance of him, as the alone mediator between himself and his creatures.

Another

Another encouraging motive which our Lord gave to his professed disciples, was the promise of divine assistance, in aid to the weakness of human nature, to co-operate with their sincere endeavours after virtue. *I will pray the Father, says our Lord, and he will give you another comforter, which will abide with you for ever, John xiv. 15, 16, 17*.*

Thus we see the foundation of the Christian church, as it was laid by Jesus Christ himself: what were the qualifications requisite to constitute the members of it; what were the ends to be proposed and answered by such societies; and what were the benefits that would arise from thence; namely, that his voluntary and faithful persevering followers, should enter into the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy eternal life.

And that the gospel might be preached to all nations, and that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, might be brought under its influence, and consequently might share in its benefits, Christ chose twelve men, (of which one proved a traitor to him, *The apostles* and to fill up whose place Matthias was *commissioned.* chosen) to be with him in his preaching and ministry among the Jews, to be witnesses of what he both taught and did, and whom he intended to appoint and qualify to preach the same gospel to the rest of mankind. And accordingly Christ, after he was put to death by the Jews and Romans, rose again from the dead, on purpose that he might strictly charge and command, and that he might excite and enable these his apostles to preach his gospel as aforesaid, and thereby pursue the great end and purpose of his coming. Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 28, 29. *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and arise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among*

* See Doctor Foster, of the Influences and Fruits of the Spirit, vol. II. p. 110.

Lawrence's Christian Morals, &c. vol. I. p. 184, 185.

Bishop of Gloucester's Three Discourses on the Influences of the Spirit.

all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things; and behold I send the promise of my Father unto you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye shall be endued with power from on high. This promise of the Father, or the enduing them with power from on high, was made good to them at the feast of Pentecost. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To the persons before-mentioned were afterwards added two more, viz. Paul and Barnabas, that in the exercise of their ministry, up and down the world, these fourteen apostles might offer to all, without distinction, the gospel of Christ, and by their preaching and example encourage others voluntarily to become Christians.

The publication of the gospel being ordained as the means to call, and engage, and prevail with sinners, in consideration of the proofs thereby given, and the benefits therein offered, to believe in Christ as the promised Messiah, and to take him with their whole hearts to be their sole teacher, lawgiver, and judge; to make open profession of that faith and self-dedication to him, and to love unfeignedly all his disciples, as they would be the members of Christ's church or kingdom:* the banner of a Christian is not the picture of a cross hung upon a pole, or made upon his forehead; but it is a virtuous and unblameable conversation, or a mind and life conformed to the gospel of Christ.

And accordingly we find that, pursuant to the commission which our Lord gave to the apostles, saying, *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you*, (which, by the way, shews the extent of the apostolic commission) they went forth to different parts to establish the kingdom of the Messiah, and to preach the gospel to all, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. Thus St. Andrew principally preached the gospel

* Rev. Mr. Samuel Bolde on Church Power, p. 51.

in Scythia, St. Bartholomew in India, St. Matthew in Parthia, St. John in the Lesser Asia, &c §.

It may here be proper, though it may seem a digression, to take notice of the peculiar as well as supernatural qualifications of the apostles to their special office and dignity; for besides their extraordinary call and commission, of which we have already taken notice, these were more especially stiled the ambassadors of God to men, for which they were qualified by the communication of spiritual gifts, and of miraculous powers. They had, indeed, seen our Lord, and were sufficiently qualified to be witnesses of the truth and reality of his resurrection from the dead, upon which grand fact they were to found the evidence of the Christian doctrines, which they had, in great measure, learnt from him, as eye and ear witnesses of his doctrines, life, and miracles. But besides this, they had the effusion of the spirit, whereby they were qualified to preach the gospel in the different parts of the world, and to work miracles in attestation of their mission and doctrine. These spiritual gifts and powers are mentioned, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10, 28, 29, 30. To them was committed, by the same spirit, the word of wisdom—the word of knowledge—the gift of discerning spirits*—and in consequence of this, of binding or loosing, remitting or retaining the sins of men † — They had also the gift of prophecy — the

§ King's Primitive Church.

* Some judicious writers understand this to relate to their discernment and prudence in the recommendation and appointment of proper persons to the ministry.

† The assuming power of the Romish church, or the pope, is in no instance more remarkable, than in claiming the power of absolution and indulgences, founded on those words, John xx. 23. *Whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted, and whose sins so ever ye retain, they are retained*, addressed to the apostles; but evidently relate to, and must be understood of, such conditions whereon God hath promised pardon. And the form of absolution, made use of in the three first centuries, was this—*Almighty God, be merciful unto thee, and forgive thee thy sins(a)*. And in the Greek church, this prayer

(a) *Ordo Romanus in the pontifical of the Latin church, p. 567.*

—the gift of tongues—the gift of interpretation of tongues, and the gift of fortitude is generally reckoned with the former. By these, and the like supernatural gifts, with which they were indued, by the effusion of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, or communicated to them sometimes instantaneously, they were enabled to give such proofs of their mission and doctrine, as might tend to the furtherance of the gospel.

Thus St. Peter and St. John cured a man who was forty years old, and had been lame from his birth, Acts ii. 4. And St. Peter raised Dorcas from the dead, and St. Paul raised Eutychus, which power did not extend to other apostles.

And we nowhere find, that this power was inherent in, or capable of being wantonly exerted by them; but absolutely dependent on the power and pleasure of the Supreme Giver.

prayer of Damascene is still cited: "O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, who hath power to forgive sins, in thy goodness and loving-kindness pass by all offences of thy servants; for thou art the God of mercies, and able to forgive sins."—In this sense, the office of the priest is to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; and, surely, what they are to declare and pronounce, must actually be done before they can really declare and pronounce it to be done.

Here it is objected, that, if this be the import of the words, and they were spoken to the apostles in that sense, that they cannot, in the same sense, belong to any of their successors. Why do we, in our ordination, retain this form of words? "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained."—No more is intended by it than this: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost for the office of a bishop, or receive ye the Holy Ghost for the office of a presbyter, declaring the remission of sins upon the terms of the gospel." And this sense, says Whitby, corresponds with the several previous declarations made on the part of the bishop or presbyter (*b*). The sense, therefore, of the protestant church, stands evidently opposed to the claims of the Romish church; though it were much to be wished, that the compilers of the offices of ordination had been more explicit with respect to the true scriptural and rational sense, in which they were therein appointed to be used.

(b) See Bishop Whitby's Sermons, X. p. 264, 265.

It is likewise observable that, though pursuant to our Lord's promise, infinite wisdom saw fit to add supernatural qualifications, for the great ends and purposes of their office, besides the privilege of being cotemporaries with Christ, and learning from him the great doctrines and duties of the Christian religion; yet our Lord cautions his apostles against an absolute dependence on such extraordinary communications. *Behold, says he, I send you forth as sheep among wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves*, intimating that, notwithstanding their special call and commission, and the extraordinary assistance they should receive, they were, nevertheless, to remember they were dependent on the divine energies, and had no claim to infallibility, as they were men, and should therefore conduct themselves with care, prudence, and circumspection.

One of the most distinguishing miraculous powers communicated to the apostles, was the ability of conferring on others some spiritual gifts; and it has been often asserted, that they did this to some of the adult converts wherever they came; though what particular gifts or powers those converts should receive, in consequence of their prayer and imposition of their hands, was not solely at their choice, but dependent on the will and direction of the Divine Spirit, who knew best what was proper, both for particular persons, and for the common interest of Christianity†. This extraordinary manifestation of the spirit, which attended the public ministration of the gospel, is sometimes represented as a plenteous and visible effusion of the divine spirit*, and at other times, in a lesser degree, conferred by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. These peculiar and extraordinary gifts and powers of the apostles, plainly shew how well qualified they were for their important undertaking, by demolishing the false religion, which had so long prevailed in the world, and establishing the principles of Christianity with all its

* Act iv. 13. viii. 39. Acts x. 44.

† See Dr. Benson of the Propagation of Christianity.

genuine effects, knowledge, righteousness, and happiness, in the world.

The learned are indeed much divided with respect to the miraculous powers residing in the apostles, and communicated by them to their successors, or subsisting in the Christian church since their time. These are points I shall not attempt to determine, but refer the readers to some of the most learned and judicious writers on the subject†.

The apostles, in consequence of their office and commission, were likewise to erect or establish churches in

Particular Churches established. every place; and to appoint pastors or elders, whose office and business it should be to watch over the particular societies of Christians for their good, by teaching and instructing, by reproof and admonishing, and by performing every good office for the establishing of their faith and virtue, and it was their method to constitute the first or ablest converts, in every city or place, to that office*, by and with the consent of that society.

And the Apostles, we are informed, were not only indefatigable, but very successful in their apostolical office, planting the churches of Jerusalem, of Samaria, Cæsarea, Antioch, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossæ, Troas, Ptolemais, Damascus, besides many others in Asia, as Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, &c||.

† Millar's Propagation of the Gospel, vol. I. p. 273, and sequel. Doctor Benson's History of the first Planting the Christian Religion, vol. I. from p. 38 to 66. Doctor Middleton's Introductory Discourse concerning the Miraculous Powers. Jackson's Remarks, &c.

* Clemens Romanus ad Corinth. p. 54.

|| For the time when these churches were planted, see Dr. Benson's Account of the first Planting of the Christian Churches, vol. 1. Christianismus Primitivus, b. ii. ch. 1. p. 6. Rev. Mr. Whiston's Primitive Christianity, in four books.

Whiston has given us the following catalogue of the first thirty bishops ordained by the apostles.

		A.D.
I. Jerusalem,	1 James, the Lord's brother, by the apostles,	30
	2 Simeon, the son of Cleophas, by the apostles,	71
	3 Judas, the son of James, by the apostles,	74
II. Cæsarea,	1 Zacchæus, the Publican,	64
	2 Cornelius, the Centurion,	67
	3 Theophilus by Luke,	86
III. Antioch,	1 Euodius, - - - Peter	50
	2 Ignatius, - - - Paul	67
IV. Alexandria,	1 Annianus, - - - Mark	62
V. Rome,	1 Linus, the son of Claudia, Paul	55
	2 Anencletus, }	Peter 67
	3 Clements, }	
VI. Ephesus,	1 Timothy, - - - Paul	57
	2 John, - - - John	70
VII. Smyrna,	1 Aristo I. - - - John	64
	2 Stratæus, the son of Lois, John	70
	3 Aristo II. - - - John	78
III. Pergamus,	1 Gaius, - - - John	67
IX. Philadelphia,	1 Demetrius, - - - John	67
X. Cenchrea,	1 Lucius, - - - Paul	67
XI. Crete,	1 Titus, - - - Paul	67
III. Athens,	1 Dionysius, - - - Paul	67
III. Tripoli,	1 Marathones, - - - Paul	67
IV. Laodicea,	1 Archippus, - - - Paul	67
IV. Colossæ,	1 Philemon, - - - Paul	67
VI. Berea,	1 Onesimus, - - - Paul	67
VII. Galatia,	1 Crescens, - - - Paul	67
	2 Aquila, }	Paul 67
III. Asia,	1 Niceras, }	
IX. Ægina,	1 Crispus, - - - Paul	67
		Each

Each of these comes under the denomination of a *particular church*, that is of a company of believers at one time, and at the same place, associating themselves together, and concurring in the participation of all the institutions and ordinances of Jesus Christ, with their proper pastors or ministers §.

At first the numbers in such churches were very few; Tertullian says, that three were sufficient to make a church; probably in allusion to our Lord's promise, that *where two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be in the midst of them*. Their number, however, was indefinite, but their character is that of the *elect, called and sanctified* by the will of God. They were first called Christians at Antioch, and, in innumerable places, they are called *the brethren*, because of their brotherly love and affection; and the *faithful*, in opposition to those who did not believe in the Lord Jesus, or his gospel †.

HISTORY of the CHURCH of ROME.

It is evident from the New Testament, that soon after Christianity was promulged by the apostles, there was a Christian church established at Rome, *Church of Rome, A. D. 55.* a community called of God to be saints, such as had by baptism been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, and professed to walk in newness of life; who are said to have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto them—to stand in the Christian church by faith—and that their faith was celebrated throughout the world. Romans i. 7, 8. Romans vi. 4, 5 ||.

§ King's Primitive Church, p. 3.

† Ibid. p. 8.

|| Christianismus Primativus, b. II. ch. 1. p. 12. See Dr. Benson's Account of St. Paul's Visit to Rome, A. D. 58, and fourth of Nero, in his History of the first planting of Christianity, vol. II. p. 184.

The general doctrine of the church of Rome is, that Peter was not only appointed by our Saviour the chief of the apostles; but that he was constituted the first bishop of Rome, and head of the universal church, and that after having been seven years bishop of Antioch, he was, in the modern phrase, translated to Rome, and continued to be bishop there twenty-five years, and then suffered martyrdom under the emperor Nero. A. D. 64, according to Blair, 68; according to Whiston.

But it is not certain which of the apostles first preached the gospel at Rome; some assert, that St. Peter came to Rome only occasionally to visit that church, and was, by order of the Emperor Nero, crucified with St. Paul, who was charged with having made many proselytes to Christianity there.

But that Peter never was bishop of Rome, is demonstrated by many credible historians and divines*, particularly *Budeus de Eccles. Apostolic.*

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C

That

* The Papists indeed say, that St. Peter was the first named an apostle by Christ to begin the gospel church, that he wrought the first miracle after Christ's ascension, and preached the first sermon, and that this apostle received the first commission to begin the Gentile Christian church, &c. but this is by no means a proof of his being bishop of Rome. First, from the silence of St. Luke, who records many things concerning Peter: he writes of his journey to Lydda, Joppa, Cæsarea, Jerusalem, and Antioch; but not one word of his going to Rome to found the papal chair.

Secondly, When the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, salutes the Christians and his fellow-labourers by name, he says not one word of Peter; and when even commending the faith of the Church, he never mentions one word of the supposed founder of it.

Thirdly, St. Peter himself speaks not one word of what the Papists assert or alledge in this matter. If he had founded the Roman church, why does he no where mention it? why does he, when writing to the dispersed Jews, no where assert his claim and prerogative?

Fourthly, The assertion of his being bishop of Rome twenty-five years, is inconsistent with the sacred chronology of those times; for from the time of Christ's death, which was in the 18th year of Tiberius, to the 13th year of Nero, when Peter was crucified, was only thirty-six years, viz. five in Tiberius's reign, four in Caligula's, fourteen in Claudius's, and thirteen in Nero's. Now Peter did not go out of Judea till twelve years after our Lord's death; then
he

That Christ ever established a monarchy in his church, or appointed Peter his viceroy, who invested the bishops of Rome, as his successors, with dominion over the whole church of Christ, are points so solidly confuted, that we may safely pass them over as things utterly unknown in the most primitive and pure ages. On the contrary, it is undeniable, that when, towards the end of

*Origin of the
title of bi-
shops.*

this century, the first and eldest of the presbyters at Rome, as in other churches, was distinguished by the title of bishop; that appellation imported no more than chief among the elders, who were otherwise all equal in office, duty, and privilege §; from hence the title of bishop took its rise.

The church of Rome was then subject to no other, and no other church subject to it, the bishop having no superintendence over other churches.

As for the word diocese, by which the bishop's charge is now usually expressed, as including many churches in it, I do not remember, says Sir Peter King,

he was cast into prison by Herod, Acts, c. xii. which was the fourth year of the Emperor Claudius, and the last of King Agrippa; six years after that, or the eighteenth year after Christ's crucifixion, we find him present at a synod at Jerusalem, Acts xv. and according to the catholic church, he was seven years at Antioch; so there remains only eleven years in which he could possibly be at Rome, and indeed there is no evidence of his ever being there in that capacity.

Fifthly, Peter being an apostle of the circumcision, Gal. ii. 7, 8. we have reason to believe, that when Paul was carried to Rome, Peter visited the Jews, who were dispersed in Greece, Thracia, the Lesser Asia, Babylon, and the East, and reaped a good harvest amongst them, till he went to visit the church of Rome near the close of his life. When therefore the apostle, 1 Peter, v. 13. says, *The church that is at Babylon saluteth you*, he plainly writes of Babylon in the east, once the head of the Assyrian empire, where there was so great a concourse of Jews: and if it be granted that Peter had been at Rome, or resided there some time, or suffered martyrdom there, this is no reason for asserting his primacy or episcopacy in that city more than at Joppa, Antioch, or Babylon.

§ History of the Popes, translated from the German original of C. W. F. Walch, c. ii. p. 4.

1 King's Primitive Church, p. 66. where he quotes Eusebius. Apud lib. v. c. xiv. p. 193.

that

ever I found it used in this sense by of the ancients ; but there is another d still retained by us, by which they frequently denominated the bishop's cure, is, parish : so in the synodical epistles of Irenæus, bishopricks of Asia are called parishes. Eusebius has in a variety of instances to confirm this reading, the bishop of the parish of Athens, the bishop of the sh of Corinth, &c. denoting the same as we now a parish, wherein a competent number of Christidwelling near together, having one bishop, pastor, minister, set over them, with whom they all met at time, to worship and serve God. The word signifi- a dwelling one by another ; thus, according to Euse- is, lib. iv. c. xv. p. 228. the church of Smyrna to the church that parishied in Philomelium ; and epistle of Clemens Romanus is, to the church of parishing at Corinth. Hitherto we find there were superintendents over many churches but the apo- ; none appointed by them as patriarchs, or metro- an bishops ; no prelates over many churches, or other presbyters ; no one claiming rule, and the r subject to him,

Diocese, its primitive im- port.

here are, indeed, some authors have made a action between bishops and presbyters, and they e Ignatius, who lived at the beginning he second century, as appropriating he title of bishop, *ἐπίσκοπος*, or overseer, at minister who was the more immedi- verseer or governor of his parish ; and that of elder resbyter, to him who had no particular care or in- ion of a parish, but was only an assistant or curate person that had ; the word *ἐπίσκοπος*, or bishop, ting a relation to a flock, or cure ; *πρεσβύτερος*, or yter, signifying only a power or ability to take harge of such flocks or cure ; the former implying tual discharge of the office, the latter a power so to

Bishop's office distinguished from a presbyter.

This distinction was sometimes followed by the eding fathers ; but oftentimes, according to primi-

tive usage, they indifferently apply those terms to each of those persons § : so that it is evident that the superiority of the bishop, in office and character, was, to this time, at best precarious, destitute of divine institution, or direction of the apostles, but was introduced in the next century, as we shall shew in its proper place.

For these reasons probably the Rev. Mr. Bolde has asserted, that episcopacy was not essential to a particular Christian church ; or that a visible society of creditably professing Christians should have a special relation to, or dependence on, one man, of a dignified character, who shall claim a right to preside over, and govern many assemblies of Christians ; I speak only of a particular Christian church, and not concerning particular churches established by civil governments||. He adds, It is likewise agreeable to primitive practice, that a particular Christian church, subsisting agreeably to Christ's institution, derived a power to appoint a person, or persons, so qualified as he directs, to officiate amongst and unto them†. But they were first to become, as it were, candidates for the ministry ; must be approved of by the majority ; and separated, or set apart to this office, by the laying on of the hands of the bishop, or presbytery ; and when the bishop of a church was dead, all the people of that church met together in one place, to choose a new bishop. Thus Sabinus was elected bishop of Emerita, by the suffrage of all the brotherhood ; and Fabianus was chosen bishop of Rome‡.

And this order of admitting none to any ecclesiastical function but by an election of the faithful, in a general assembly, was inviolably observed in the church for more than 200 years*.

§ King's Primitive Church, p. 66. who quotes Eusebius apud lib. v. cap. xiv. p. 193.

|| Bolde on Church Power, occasioned by the Bangorian Controversy, p. 59.

† Ibid. p. 60.

‡ Apud Cyp. Epist. lxxviii. f. vi. p. 102. Apud Euseb. lib. vi. cap. xxviii. p. 229.

* Father Paul of Beneficial Matters, p. 56.

As the apostles office and business was to propagate the gospel, and to ordain the elected bishops or elders, for the care of particular churches; and the most important charge of preaching, *The office of explaining, and inculcating the great Doctrines.* doctrines and duties of the Christian religion; whose business it should be to administer the sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's supper, to the people or church over whom they were appointed; so the apostles, as the occasion and circumstances of things required, and the better to answer the purposes of Christian societies, did, by and with the advice and approbation of their fellow Christians, appoint the office of *Deacons*. Those, at their first appointment and institution, were six in number, who occasionally baptised, but generally only assisted at the administration of baptism, at the Lord's supper, in the care of the poor, and the visitation of the sick: hence the offices of bishops and deacons in the Christian church, to answer the purposes beforementioned, were always esteemed of apostolical institution.

The particular ceremony by which any bishop, pastor, or deacon, was set apart after the choice of the people, was by the laying on of hands of a bishop, or presbyter, and prayer. By these solemn acts, many of the ordained elders were not only set a-part, but it pleased God, as an eternal evidence of their mission, to confer extraordinary gifts and graces, whereby they were qualified, in an extraordinary manner, for the discharge of their important office.†, and even to their successors. It is

C 3

Of ordination.

generally

† Hence the pope and bishops of the catholic church do, as the vicar of Christ, and successors of the apostles, assert, that by their ordination of priests they are thereby consecrated to their respective functions, and also receive grace to discharge them(a). And in this particular likewise the modesty and good sense of our church

(a) *Profession of Catholic Faith, p. 5. compared with the Definition of Holy Orders, p. 23.*

generally allowed, some supernatural and extraordinary gifts and powers were communicated for planting Christian churches, and their greater edification: but how long this continued in the Christian church, the learned are not agreed.

The ordinance of laying on of hands by the bishop or presbyter, was likewise performed on the newly-baptised, and this was some times attended *Confirmation.* with extraordinary gifts, such as might tend to the furtherance of the gospel; but was not in general performed with any such promise, or followed with such wonderful effects, but was then used as a rite of the Christian church, by which was signified their being separated and dedicated to the service of God.

Thus we have not only taken a view of the foundation of the Christian church, as it was laid by Jesus Christ himself, but likewise of the peculiar qualifications, duty, and business of the apostles, for propagating the gospel and establishing Christian churches throughout the world, in the first century of the Christian church; and hitherto the apostles, notwithstanding their dignity, did not pretend to infallibility, did not assume authority over the consciences of their fellow Christians, but gave many instances of their zeal, diligence, and faithfulness; the more venerable and praise-worthy, as it was always accompanied with modesty and humility. As the apostles received this commission from Christ, they were bound to confine

is conspicuous: for neither the bishop pretends, nor the person receiving orders is taught to believe, that any sanctity, dignity, or privilege, with respect to the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, are conveyed by the imposition of the bishop's hands at this ordination; and that nothing more is intended by the bishop, in this part of the service, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, than his solemn wish, directed to heaven, that he might receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest, to which he is set apart by the imposition of his hands(a).

(a) *Bishop Whitby's Sermons, with which corresponds Doctor Benson's account of this matter before cited.*

them.

themselves wholly to it, and not to exceed the limits of it: they were his servants who sent them, and the message they received from him, that, and that only, were they to deliver to the world. Thus St. Paul says of himself, that *God had committed to him the word of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 20. *and that he was an ambassador for Christ, that he preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and himself the servant of others for Jesus sake; that he had no dominion over others faith*, 2 Cor. i. 24. no power to impose upon them arbitrary things or articles of faith, which he had not received from Christ; and that this was the principal matter of his comfort, that *he had not shunned to declare all the council of God.* Acts xx. 27.

The apostles recommends a free and impartial enquiry after truth, and enjoins it on his fellow Christians to search the scriptures; and it is evident, by comparing some passages of the evangelists with their epistles, that the canon of the books of the Old Testament was ascertained by them*: and St. Paul directs his epistles to the Corinthians, *to all that in every place call upon the Lord Jesus*; and the other epistles of the apostles in general, are inscribed, with equal latitude, and were, with the other parts of the New Testament, made the criterion of truth to all Christians.

Indeed we have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Christ and his apostles, but from the records of the New Testament; and as these contain the whole revelation of *Scripture the rule of faith.* the gospel, all that we are to believe and practise as Christians, it is an undeniable consequence, that Christians can no better demonstrate their subjection and fidelity to Christ, as Lord and lawgiver in his church, than by acquainting themselves with the sacred records of truth, and religiously adhering to

* Doctor Cosin of the Canon of Scripture, p. 22.

them, as the only rule and standard of their faith and worship†.

If you ask, what form of worship took place in this early age of the Christian church, Tertullian informs us, the scriptures were first read, then psalms sung, then a sermon preached, and prayers presented‡. Thus Justin Martyr writes: they first begun their public worship with reading the writings of the prophets; and as soon as they had them in M. S. the epistles of the apostles; afterwards they sung psalms, then they preached the word, which was a commentary on the lessons read, and then concluded with prayer and intercession||.

The discipline they observed was no other than the execution of those laws prescribed by the apostles, for the correction and prevention of such offences as were incident to the members of the church of Christ, in which great regard was had to the nature of the offence, and, except in the most criminal instances, was always exercised with much lenity and gentleness, in the consciousness of their own imperfection and liability to err.

It is indeed observable, that notwithstanding the simplicity of doctrines, worship, and ceremonies, that was preserved in the apostolic age, there were some different apprehensions amongst the Jewish proselytes to Christianity, touching some of the Jewish rites; and, for the sake of truth and peace, we find the apostles thought it requisite to consult together, and accordingly assembled at Jerusalem, A. C. 53. in which the apostles dispensed with an observation of the ceremonial law, seeing that the Christian dispensation was sufficient to the salvation of its votaries, Acts xv, 11.

They likewise held another council at Jerusalem, A. D. 60. in which they tolerated some legal obser-

† Doctor Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 13, 15.

‡ De Animâ, c. iii. p. 530.

|| Apology ii. p. 98.

vances for a time, that by such condescension the weaker part, both of Jews and Gentiles, might be gained to the belief and profession of Christianity, Acts xxi. 18—22.

There is no mention made in the New Testament, nor any other authentic proof in this century, that any council was called to compile canons for the order and government, or creeds and summaries of faith, for uniformity of sentiments in the Christian churches. Decrees of this kind much better suit with the ambition and authority assumed by some ecclesiastics in later time: though I am sensible a work of this kind has long since made its appearance in the world under that specious character*: but we have many testimonies of the primitive Christians

* This book is said to be compiled by Clement, bishop of Rome, who was chosen to that office in the year 67, and died in 88: it is entitled *Apostolical Constitutions*, digested in eight books; consisting of 70 canons relating to the laity, and 85 with respect to the dignity, office, and duty of ecclesiastics: and the late Rev. and learned Mr. Whiston has, with much pains, endeavoured to establish their authenticity; in which he has likewise pointed out the order and method of the several matters therein contained, respecting doctrine, worship, discipline, and manners; in which is likewise inserted the canon of scripture, approved and recommended by the apostles, which were extant before the year 63, together with the Baptismal Creed, and one other formulary or creed, chiefly calculated to promote the doctrine of Arius with regard to the subordination of the Son to the Father.

Then follows an Essay on the *Apostolical Constitutions*, wherein our author endeavours to shew their consistency with the doctrines taught by Christ and his apostles; quotes a variety of testimonies from the fathers and historians of several succeeding centuries, in proof of some or other of those constitutions, or whose sentiments coincided with them. That they are of great antiquity, will not be denied; but that they have no just claim to the authority contended for, will, I presume, be readily admitted by any one who compares the contents of them with the doctrines contained in the New Testament.

For besides the entire silence of the New Testament concerning them, which, to me, is no small proof that they are spurious, several of those canons carry with them apparent marks of mere modern invention. The dignity and power of the clergy is here, like the hierarchy of the church of Rome, stretched to such an exorbitant height, as could hardly be consistent with Christian liberty, or with the safety of Christians, especially under heathen governors.—To them

Christians invariable regard to the doctrines and examples of our Lord and his apostles; and by the Steadfastness of their faith, simplicity of their worship and behaviour, were an honour to their profession as Christians; but notwithstanding these exemplary lives, there was such an opposition in the principles of Christianity, to the practices and views of the heathen Emperors, that they persecuted the Christians with the greatest severity.

The first persecution of the Christians began at Rome, A. D. 64. Among others St. Peter and St. Paul suffered martyrdom*.

That called the second persecution of the Christians, began in the reign of Domitian, A. D. 95 †.

This,

was to be committed the care of the ecclesiastical revenue, for which they were accountable to none but God.—Moreover, the titles given the priests, in some places, are impious: they are not only stiled prophets, rulers, kings, and governors, but also mediators between God and his faithful people, and in chap. xxvi. and chap. xxix. stiled gods.—They mention the using holy oil for anointing the candidates before, and of ointments for sealing them after, baptism—of using water with the wine in the Lord's supper.—They recommend pecuniary fines for sin, prayers, or offerings and festivals for the dead—esteem and honour for the reliques of saints, and other ceremonies equally superstitious and unscriptural: for which we must refer the reader to Mr. Whiston's *Primitive Christianity Revived*, book iii. to which is added his defence.

But so incongruous did the general tenour of them appear to the New Testament, and so unsatisfactory his defence, that they were censured by the convocation at Canterbury, A. D. 1711. The form of which is as follows:

Whereas the said William Whiston, the better to support his heretical opinions, speaking of a book commonly called the *Apostolical Constitutions*, hath these words: "I have, I think, certainly found, that those *Apostolical Constitutions*, which the *Anti-christian church* hath so long laid aside as *spurious and heretical*, are no other than the original laws and doctrines of the gospel, the new covenant, or most sacred standard of Christianity, equal in their authority to the four gospels themselves, and superior in authority to the epistles of single apostles; some parts of them being our Saviour's own original laws, delivered to the apostles; and the other parts the public acts of the apostles themselves, met in council at *Cæsarea* and *Jerusalem*, a little before their death; and that this was the

con-

* Blair.

† Ibid.

This, however, as it was a trial of their faith, their patience, their sincerity, their fortitude, and magnanimity, those virtues shone so conspicuous in their lives, even unto death, as render them amiable and illustrious examples to future generations.

CENTURY THE SECOND.

Century the second affords us some instances, in which the church of Rome varied from her primitive state*.

The

constant opinion and testimony of the earliest ages of the gospel :—" We cannot but declare these assertions concerning a book, *which was never yet acknowledged as part of the canon of scripture by any general council, nor received as such in any Christian church*, to be highly absurd and impious, tending to create in the minds of Christians great uncertainties, as to their rule of faith, and to subvert that faith which was once delivered to the saints, and which is preserved in the books of the New Testament, received in our church.

* It has been already observed, that it is very unlikely, that Peter was ever bishop of the particular society or congregation of Christians at Rome; because he could not execute such an office without quitting his apostleship, and thereby betraying that trust which Christ had reposed in him: but if this were granted, nothing can justly be inferred from thence in favour of any apostolical power or jurisdiction, which might be supposed to descend from him to his successors the bishops of Rome, or to any other bishop; because the bishop of Rome did not succeed St. Peter in his apostolical, but in his episcopal character only (a) . . . Most vain it must therefore be, for the late bishops of Rome, or any other bishop, to lay claim to the power of the keys, let that power be what it will, or any other apostolical power or jurisdiction whatever, seeing no such power has, or could be descended, to them. For the apostolical commission extended no farther than the *fourteen apostles*, and therefore, when the apostles died, the apostolic office, and consequently all apostolic power, died with them.

It is likewise observable, how vain the pretence is, that the bishops and clergy of the church of Rome have been continued by a *regular uninterrupted succession* from the apostles down to the present time; whereas, according to the account of father Paul (b), the succession of bishops and clergy has been greatly interrupted: thus, not only in the apostles time, but down to the end of this century, those, appointed to any offices in Christian societies, were elected, or set apart, to their respective offices by the body of Christians; that is, by

(a) See Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy, Chubb's True Gospel.

(b) Father Paul's Account of Beneficiary Matters, p. 5, 6.

The union of different churches in succeeding times, however salutary in itself, was attended with many abuses, especially the union of those churches which had before, either by their situation, or by new congregations, been connected, furnished a spacious opportunity for one church to acquire more authority than others; and this was chiefly the case of those churches, as were most considerable in number, or could claim apostolical foundation, or in the capital of a province.

All these circumstances contributed to raise the credit and dignity of the church of Rome: her bishop gradually distinguished himself more and more from the elders. We meet with encomiums upon that church so early as in the second century: but these, by no means, prove that other churches submitted to her; the contrary manifestly appears from the instances of the Asiatic churches in that early dispute, concerning the fitness, expediency, and duty of observing Easter, commonly called the celebration of Easter*.

The first considerable invasion on the church liberties was made by Victor, bishop of Rome, about the year 195, relating to the time of celebrating Easter day. The Christians of Asia the Less kept it on the 14 day after the first new moon that followed the vernal equinox, on what day soever it happened. On the contrary, the churches of Rome, France, Corinth, &c. held, that Easter day ought always to be on a Sunday. Victor, who could not easily decide the controversy, without more ado excommunicated all the Christian churches of Asia—at least so far as to withdraw from, and refuse communion, with the Asiatic churches on that account, according to Eusebius, to whom we refer the reader.

by that society they were appointed to serve. And though the using, or applying the outward sign of such election, by laying on of hands, and of praying for God's blessing, was performed by the bishop; yet that did not affect the act of the society or congregation, whole minister he was, or the independency of one church on another; but was a mere appendix to it.

* See Irenæus *Advers. Hæres.* and Walch's *Hist. Eccles.* ch. l. sects. ii. v. and viii.

The office of a bishop was now held superior to that of Presbyters ; but it is not demonstrable, that the bishops of Rome had titles of honour superior to other bishops, or a right to controul the conduct of other churches †.

† Concerning the names of Papa, Episcopus, Episcoparum, and Pontifex Maximus, said to have been given by Justin Martyr and Tertullian, to the bishop of Rome, see Walch's Hist. Eccles.

Chillingworth, the protestant champion, besides many other divines, has wrote largely in defence of episcopacy ; and all, in general, agree in this point, that it was not introduced in the first century, or by the apostles, though they unquestionably prove, that this office, or superior dignity in the church, was instituted, or generally in use, as early as the second century.

Mr. Chillingworth defines episcopacy, to be the choice of one man of eminent sanctity and sufficiency to have the care of all the churches within a certain precinct or diocese, and furnishing him with authority, not absolute or arbitrary ; but under the regulation of laws, to the intent, that all churches under him may be provided with good and able pastors. This he apprehends, 1st, is not repugnant to the government settled in, and for the church, by the apostles ; 2d, That it is as well calculated for the reformation of any evil in the church, or the introduction of any good which we desire to introduce, as any other form of government ; and 3d, That there is no law upon record of our Saviour against it. He quotes Petrus Molinæus, who, in his Defence of Presbyterian Government, acknowledgeth, that presently after the apostles times, it was ordained, that in every city, one of the presbytery should be called a bishop, who should have pre-eminence over his colleagues, to avoid that confusion which oftentimes ariseth out of equality, &c. He likewise quotes Theodorus Beza, to the same purport (a).

The late bishop Hoadly (b) says, We think we can demonstrate, that in the primitive times, the administration of ecclesiastical affairs was in the hands of bishops, who had presbyters subject to them, that as the apostles maintained a superiority over the presbyters of the churches they constituted, so, upon occasion of their absence, they settled others in this superiority ; that as these, thus succeeding the apostles, had the power of ordination committed to them, so their successors, in the following ages, claimed this power as their right, and looked upon ordination to be their office in the regular course of things.

Bingham (c) treats more largely of the antiquity, authority, and dignity of episcopacy, their honorary titles, and venerable character.

(a) *Chillingworth of Episcopacy, annexed to his other works, from p. 1, to 5, inclusive.*

(b) *Hoadly's Reasonableness of Conformity, p. 3.*

(c) *Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church abridged, from p. 50 to 100.*

Again,

Again the personal characters of the bishops and fathers in this century, give them no superiority or advantage over other churches, or their successors, since it is apparent they were less learned and more credulous, and in many respects more defective, than some of later time; for there was never any period of time in all ecclesiastical history, in which so many rank heresies were publicly professed, nor in which so many spurious books were published under the names of Christ and his apostles, and apostolic writers *.

However, a variety of opinions prevailed in this century, inasmuch that the bishops began to compose formularies or creeds for their respective churches, or in opposition to some principal errors; and this seems to be the earliest period when part of what is called the apostles creed was introduced §.

*Apostles creed
first intro-
duced.*

A super-

* Archbishop Wake, in his Preliminary Discourse to the Genuine Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers, p. 89, Where he has given us a list of a great part of those spurious pieces, with a short account of each—In which he tells us it would be endless, to insist on all the spurious pieces, which were only attributed to St. Paul; but that the superstitious books ascribed to St. Peter his Acts, his Gospel, his Revelation, were in much greater authority, even to the time of Eusebius, (sect. xviii. xix.); he observes also, that the book called the Recognitions of St. Clement, which he takes to be the most learned, as well as the most ancient of any of those pieces, was not set forth till about the middle of the second century, and is rejected by Eusebius as one of those many impostures, which were even then published under the name of that saint, sect. xxviii.

§ Having mentioned the apostles creed, it may be proper to give a general account thereof. The learned author of the Critical History of this creed very justly acknowledges, that this creed was not the work of one man, or of a day, (he might have said, nor of one century). The ancient fathers never indeed called it by the name of the apostles creed, but say it was agreeable to what they taught. Most of the articles are indisputably so; some of them are said to be derived from Philip's requiring of the eunuch a profession of his faith in Christ, as the Son of God, as a pre-requisite to his being baptized: and, for a considerable time, the christian bishops contented themselves with some such general form of words, without any particular explication of the nature and action of God, or the state of the Son. The reason of the additional articles seems to be this: not

A superstitious veneration for utensils and vessels belonging to the church took place, so that none but the priests

not long after the apostles time, several heresies sprung up in the church, subversive of the fundamentals of Christianity, and even of all religion. Thus the first article, *I believe in God the Father*, was introduced in opposition to the Manichæans, who asserted two independent deities, A. D. 276. The word Almighty was also added to this article, against some Manichæans, who asserted, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were but one person. The second article, *and in Jesus Christ our Lord*, was introduced about the same time, in opposition to Sabellianism, who made the Son and Holy Spirit to be only virtues or emanations of the deity. The words, *he descended into hell*, were neither in the Roman nor oriental creeds. The phrase, *communion of saints*, was not in any creed till above 400 years after Christ, and then not immediately received in all. The clause of *life everlasting* was omitted in several; and whoever shall compare the Grecian or the French creed, recorded by Iræneus, those of Carthage cited by Tertullian, that of Aquila, Hippo, Ravenna, or Turin, will find them all to vary; which, with other considerations, sufficiently evidence the apostles could not be the authors of the creed that passes in their name (*b*). The repetition of the creed at every assembly was appointed in the eastern church by Timothy, archbishop of Constantinople, about the year 500 (*c*); about which time the bishop of Antioch likewise prescribed the reading of it at the public administration of divine service. In the western churches, at a synod of thirty-five bishops, it was appointed to be read and explained to the Catechumens, who were afterwards to be admitted to baptism; but the general and constant reading thereof seems not to have prevailed in the western churches, till five hundred years after Christ: by the decree of the third council of Toledo, it was enjoined to be read throughout all the churches of Spain and Gallicia (*d*).

Mr. Whiston asserts, that the Eusebian or Arian doctrine was, for the main, the doctrine of the church for the two first centuries (*e*). This doctrine was differently understood and represented at that time by Alexander; and, in like manner, the doctrine of Alexander misrepresented by Arius. Arius expressly asserts, in a letter to Eusebius, his intimate friend, "This is what we have and do profess, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any manner a part of the unbegotten God, nor from any part of the material world; but that, by the will and council of the Father, he existed before all time and ages, perfect God, the Only-begotten

(*a*) *Critical History*, p. 32, 33.

(*b*) *Ibid.* p. 29.

(*c*) *Ibid.* p. 42, 43.

(*d*) *Theodor. Lætor. Eccles. Hist.* l. ii. p. 563.

(*e*) *Memoirs of Dr. Clarke*, p. 10.

priests were permitted to handle them*. Laws were made for fasting on particular days, and followed with many superstitious observances†. Great controversies arose about the lawfulness of baptizing infants, which have ever since continued a dispute in the Christian church‡. Others were for limiting baptism to the time of Easter and Whitsuntide, while others held that all times were alike§. Others practised a trine immersion, and Tertullian mentions it as a common practice||. But others immersed the body only once, and adult believers made up the main body of the baptized+. Baptism was then accompanied with the imposition of hands, which was looked upon as the completion of baptism, generally performed by a trine immersion of the Catechumen, at the name of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost***.

The third persecution of the Christians, under Trajan the emperor, commenced A. D. 107. The fourth began under the emperor Adrian, 125; the fifth under Marcus Aurelius, A. C. 160.

CENTURY THE THIRD.

In the third century the bishops exalted themselves highly above other pastors, and drew many dangerous consequences from the doctrine of one catholic church. Some bishops even claimed a superiority to others, but

and Unchangeable; and that, therefore, before he was begotten or formed, he was not; but that there never was a time when he was not (f).

* History of Popery, vol. II. p. 100.

† Ibid.

‡ See Dr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism, and Dr. Gale's Answer.

§ Cave's Primitive Christianity, p. 307.

|| Tertullian adv. Marcion, lib. iii. p. 226.

+ Cave's Primitive Christianity, p. 305. Compare Cave, Wall, Toogood, with Grantham, Gale, Gill, &c.

** See Lawrence R. of Yelvertoft's Christian Morals, p. 192 to 196.

(f) Theod. C. H. l. i. c. 5, cited by Dr. Chandler in his Introduction to Limberch's Hist. of the Inquisition, p. 24.

they

they were at the same time jealous of each other, and the doctrine of the equality of bishops admitted of no superiority §; they considered the bishop of Rome as one of their brethren, and were offended at Stephen for pretending to prescribe laws to them, though they willingly allowed the Roman church to be one of the principal.

It is therefore impossible that the other bishops should acknowledge him as their judge. Advice given in friendship and confidence implies no jurisdiction. It is admitted, however, that in the third century, a more immediate foundation was laid for that authority and pre-eminence which was afterwards assumed; but that neither the bishops of Rome pretended to be infallible, nor others thought them so, is the more clear and demonstrable: they themselves giving proof of the contrary, both by their example, and by the stress they laid on councils.

The church of Rome consisted at first of teachers and hearers; the first were either elders or deacons, but so early as this century their offices were greatly increased, viz. bishops, presbyters, deacons, sub-deacons, acolythist, readers, &c. but no mention was then made of the office or privilege of cardinals. In the most important concerns, the assent of the people was required, and the usual circular letters were sent to them†.

The bishop usually obtained his office by election, in which the laity also voted. The imposition of hands was occasionally performed by bishops in different places, of whom some attended on that occasion.

The priests, deacons, and other clergy, says father Paul, were also presented by the people, and ordained by the bishop; or else nominated by the bishop, and, with the consent of the people, ordained by him. No person that was unknown was admitted, nor did the bishop ordain any but such as were approved, or indeed

§ See the Translation of Walch's History, p. 42.

† See Cornelius's Letter to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, in Constant. Epistol. Pontific.

proposed by the people, whose concurrence was thought so necessary, that the Pope St. Leo, as he was surnamed, proves at large the invalidity of a bishop's ordination without. In this all the fathers of the church in those times agree; and Constance, being chosen bishop of Milan by the clergy, St. Gregory thought he could not be consecrated without the consent of the inhabitants, who being at that time retired to Genoa to avoid the ravages of the barbarous nations, a message was sent to them at his instance, to know their pleasure concerning it. Historians differ in characterising the Christians at this time. St. Cyprian, in his account of the state of the church just before the Decian persecution, about the year 250, tells us, that the body of Christians chiefly aimed at increasing their patrimony; that there was no sound faith or true devotion in the priest, no benevolence in their works, no discipline in their manners; that it was common to contract marriage with unbelievers, and that Christians were prostituted to the Gentiles; that bishops, neglecting their divine stewardship, and the relief of the necessitous brethren in the church, became stewards in secular affairs, and in consequence many errors and irregularities prevailed†. The learned have reckoned ninety different heresies, which all sprang up within the three first centuries§.

But, perhaps, these accounts will be thought partial, and unfavourable to the state of religion at the close of this century, when the christian church is so generally represented as retaining her primeval purity till after this period. I shall therefore give an abstract from Dupin's History of the Church:

He says, that "the fathers of the church to this time taught, that the principles of faith were the holy scriptures and tradition; that mysteries were to be believed, though they could not be comprehended; they spoke of

|| Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 20.

†. Abstract from Dr. Middleton's Introductory Discourse. p. 38, 39.

§ See Archb. Wake on the Fathers, quoted p. 30.

the nature of God, and his attributes, in a most excellent manner; they opposed, with great success, the false divinities of the heathens, and the errors of those who admitted of more gods than one; but they owned the Trinity of three persons in one only God; acknowledged the divinity and eternity of the Word, and of the Holy Ghost, and in general all the articles of the apostles creed*."

There are extant some creeds or summaries of the Christian faith, drawn up at the close of this century, intended for the unity of faith in particular churches, as those of Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome; by comparing which together, the reader will perceive how the unity of the faith was preserved, with a diversity of expression; and is an evident proof, that one universal form had not been pitched upon and prescribed to the whole church: every bishop was at liberty to draw up a creed for the use of his own church, only keeping to the analogy of faith and sound doctrine†.

Sir Peter King gives us the following account of the worship and ceremonies of the primitive church, viz. that they began their service with reading the scriptures. Then every one sang a hymn or psalm out of the Bible, or of their own composing—that they sometimes sang alternately, and sometimes conjointly. Then began their sermon by way of exposition of the lesson and exhortation, generally by the bishop of the parish. Afterwards all the congregation rose up to prayers, which were offered through Christ. They used the Lord's prayer at the beginning of their devotions; yet they did not use that only, but such other supplications to God, as the variety of their circumstances required. They usually prayed standing with their hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, the minister exercising his gifts in suitable matter and apt expression. Baptism,

* Dupin's History of the three first Centuries.

† Cyprian's Ep. lxxix. ad magnum Constit. Apost. lib. vii. c. xli.

he says, was performed by the bishop or pastor of the respective parish to Catechumens, who had given a firm assent to the articles of the Christian faith, and likewise some proof of their resolution to lead a good life. He also admits, that infants were baptised in this century, and immediately received the sacrament; that this was generally called the Lord's supper, which was eating bread and drinking wine, first set apart by prayer and thanksgiving, in commemoration of Jesus Christ. They partook of it, says Socrates, in a table gesture, eating as at their love-feasts*.

Pliny the younger, the heathen, confesses to the emperor Trajan, that the cause of the Christians was a matter worthy of deliberation, by reason of their number and character—that they usually, on their solemn days, met together before sun-rising, and sang hymns to God and Christ, whom they worshipped, and obliged themselves, by an oath, not to commit any wickedness†.

Mr. Cave gives us a large and most amiable account of the primitive Christians: he says, their piety was active and zealous: afflicted innocence triumphant, their patience unconquerable under the greatest trials and persecutions: in short, down to this period we shall see the divine and holy precepts drawn into action, and the most excellent spirit of the gospel breathing in the hearts and lives of those primitive Christians‡.

Nevertheless, they were greatly persecuted, insomuch that some were put to cruel deaths, and others driven from their habitations. That called the sixth persecution of the Christians commenced under Septimus Severus, A. D. 202. The seventh persecution began in the reign of Maximus Severus, A. D. 235. The eighth in the reign of Decius, A. D. 250. The ninth

* See Justin Martyr's Apology ii. p. 98. Socrates, lib. v. Tertullian de Oratione, p. 659. Delaun's Plea, p. 35. King's Primitive Church, P. II. p. 6, 9, 10, 12, 18, 26, 31, 37, 40, 54.

† Plinii lib. x. ep. xevii. p. 1387.

‡ Cave's Primitive Christianity, part III. p. 205 to 389.

under Gallineus and Valerianus, A. D. 257 §. But, about the close of this century, there was a dreadful famine in the eastern part of the empire, where Maximinus reigned, and a sore plague, which affected the sight of persons; upon which the Christians could not help observing, that Maximinus had inflicted the punishment of depriving some Christians of their eyes; but that nevertheless they signalized themselves for their piety and charity towards all persons in this public calamity, and forced even the pagan adversaries to admire and commend their behaviour †.

CENTURY THE FOURTH.

The fourth century furnishes us with many transactions of an interesting nature. Though hitherto Christianity appears to have been propagated with tolerable simplicity, and the Christian church retained much of its primeval purity, especially with respect to manners, and in a great regard for the scriptures, the canon of which was settled about this time; and by these means the darkness of paganism was in a good measure banished from a great part of the known world. We are nevertheless informed, that "soon after, the Christian world fell into endless schisms and contentions, and had destroyed, in great measure, that peace, love and charity, which the gospel was intended to promote; and, instead thereof, provoked one another to malice. They lost, in a great degree, the substance of their religion, while they eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it; and that by this means many of the superstitions and corruptions we now complain of in the church of Rome, were not only broached but established *."

For more than three hundred years Christianity lived and flourished under discouragement and frequent

§ Eusebius ix. 8,

† Jortin's Remarks, v. III. p. 268.

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse to the Koran.

persecution. After the Roman empire became Christian it was greatly corrupted, till the empire fell, and made way for the dominion and grandeur of the bishop of Rome, under whom the corruption arose to an amazing height, and true Christianity was almost lost for several ages †.

Early in this century, in which the fathers Cyril, Basil, Gregory, and Ambrose, flourished, was instituted the monastic life; but, notwithstanding this institution, and the pretence of sanctity to countenance it, the love of power and riches appears from the consequences to be predominant, or that it was at best founded in superstition.

From this time the church became modelled by assuming priests; the divines attempted to explain the mysteries of religion by the rules of logic, and imposing articles of faith by authority, rather than convincing by argument.

In this century, the popes of Rome laid the foundation of that monarchical power and grandeur to which they afterwards rose.

One of the first and most essential steps was the erection of the dignity of patriarch, afterwards confirmed by the Nicene council; and thus the hierarchy or government of the church became modelled; according to the constitution of the Roman empire. This being the design of their measures, another fundamental principle was added to it, viz. that the precedence and authority of bishops over others, should be determined by the rank of the cities where they resided; and of consequence, in process of time, as it could be effected, the bishop of Rome must have the supremacy; and this was managed with so much art, as to be confirmed in the next council, without appearing to have previously made a point of it §.

† Dr. Benson's History of the first planting of Christianity, p. 6.

§ Walch's History of the Popes.

Constantine, who, for his gallant acts, was surnamed the Great, was the first emperor that declared himself a Christian, A. D. 312, and constituted the cross his banner: he restored peace and tranquillity to the Christians, he built many noble churches and oratories, wherein he suffered no Gentile altars or images to be placed, nor any heathenish festivals to be solemnized §. He also wrote a large pathetic epistle to the provincial governors of the east; where, with great wisdom and piety, he exhorts all his subjects to embrace Christianity: but, when he had used many gentle methods to reclaim the Gentile world, he proceeded by more severe methods to quell the pagan idolatry; uncovered their temples, and exposed their idols; and at the same time took great care, that bishops or pastors were settled every where in the Christian churches. Though this great prince was not baptized till a little before his death, which was May 22, A. D. 338.*

But when the church, under Constantine and his successors, enjoyed the protection of the civil powers, the Christians compared their present with their past condition, and called to mind the sufferings of their predecessors, and the patience and fortitude which they had exerted, particularly in the last and severest persecution. These considerations raised in them an high, and indeed, in some measure, a just veneration for the martyrs. But it did not stop here, it ran into excess, and produced bad effects. Every rumour concerning the behaviour of those saints was received without examination, and represented as meritorious, insomuch that certain monks found their account in going about, under the pretence of selling their bones and reliques.

The fathers of those times, as Athanasius, Gregory, Nazianzen, but particularly Chrysostom, with his popular eloquence, contributed to the utmost of their power to encourage the superstitious veneration and

§ See Spanhemius and the Theodosian Codex.

invocation of saints, the love of monkery, and the belief of miracles, wrought by monks and reliques. Some of those fathers, particularly Gregory, were in other respects valuable men ; but this was the distemper of those times, and they were not free from it †.

Thence arose religious addresses to the martyrs, who were considered as patrons and intercessors, which tended to lessen the reliance and gratitude due to Christ, and to substitute new expedients in the room of rational piety and strict morality.

Some instances during Constantine's reign are an undeniable proof where the government of the church was vested, and how the bishops of Rome were esteemed as to their authority in those days.

When Donatus stood condemned as a heretic by the churches of Afric, Constantine left him not to be judged by the bishop of Rome, at that time Miltiades, but appointed the bishops of Colen, Anthun, and Arles, to hear his cause ; who not agreeing, he joined with them the said Miltiades ; and after that, upon an appeal from their order, the emperor heard and determined it himself, pronouncing the bishop of Carthage innocent, and his adversaries deserving censure ||.

The sentiments of Arius, commonly called the Arian heresy, (which we have before explained) began to prevail. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, opposed himself against him, and sent epistles to all the churches, and among the rest to Rome ; but, without waiting for advice from them, excommunicated Arius. This kindling a great fire, Constantine was applied to, and the famous council of Nice was assembled by the immediate command or precept of Constantine ; and by this and other instances it appears by whose authority councils were convened, at that time, and for some hundreds of years afterwards, but, if you ask Bellarmine, he says only by the pope,

† See Chrysostom, 1. i. Orat. xl. p. 485.

|| Augustine's Epistles, clxii. and clxvi.

not by the emperor, unless his holiness first approve of it §. And when this council were convened, observe their stile, viz. "We, here assembled by the grace of God and favour of Constantine our prince, beloved of God *". When this council was called by the sole order of Constantine, he also sat amongst them as president; the bishop of Rome was not there, but sent two deputies, stiled presbyters. But so far was he, by his deputies, chief there, that the first bishop, who opened the matter and gave his opinion, was Eustathius bishop of Antioch; and in the sixth canon of that council for ranking and ordering of bishops in their places, no mention is made of the pre-eminence of Rome to any other city, but this general phrase used, *That every church shall retain her due honour* †.

The number of bishops in this council were 318, besides vast numbers of presbyters, deacons, acolythists, &c. Eusebius tells us, that some came to the council with worldly views of gain; and Theodoret, that others were subtle and crafty, and of a quarrelsome, malicious temper, which appeared immediately upon the opening of the council; for, notwithstanding the emperor was present, who admonished them to lay aside all their differences, and to enter into measures of union and peace, they fell to gross reflections on each other, and raised great disturbances, insomuch that he was obliged to interpose his authority, and with much persuasion silenced them.

When the emperor had brought them to some temper, they fell in good earnest to creed-making, and drew up and subscribed that which, from the place where they were assembled, was called the Nicene ¶.

By

§ Lib. i. de Conc. c. xii. See Hist. of Popery, vol. I. p. 25.

* Vid. Act. Concil. Nic. vol. i.

† Theodoret, lib. i. 7.

¶ This creed was composed at this first general council of Nice, A. D. 325, but it received many additions and alterations at the second general council, at Constantinople, A. D. 381, and therefore might be more properly stiled the Constantinopolitan Creed:
and

By the accounts of the transactions in this assembly, given by Athanasius himself in his letter to the African bishops, it appears, that they were determined to insert in the creed such words as were most obnoxious to the Arians, and thus to force them to a public separation from the church*: and when those of the Arian party proposed in writing to the synod the form of faith they had drawn up, the bishops of the orthodox side no sooner read it than they gravely tore it in pieces, and called it a spurious and false confession, and after they had filled the place with noise and confusion, universally accused them of betraying the doctrine according to godliness; and when the Arians would have consented to forms of expression that were general and least exceptionable, the orthodox party would admit of no other phrases than, *That the Son was consubstantial and of the same substance with the Father*; and notwithstanding the Arians urged, that this expression was unscriptural, the orthodox would not admit of any alteration; and all the council subscribed the creed, (except five bishops, who, beside other objections, were displeased with the word Consubstantial;) and the orthodox even proceeded so far as to cut off from communion all who would not agree to, and subscribe this creed. In this public manner did the bishops assert a dominion over the faith and consciences of others, and assumed a power not only to dictate to them what they should believe, but even to anathematize and expel from the Christian church all who refused to submit to their decisions, and own their authority; for after they had

and as the Arian or orthodox party prevailed, this creed was censured or confirmed in some of the succeeding councils for several centuries. The third council of Toledo, which was held in the seventh century, held this creed in great veneration, as more largely condemning all heresies than the apostles, and ordered that it should be always recited by the people before the sacrament, to shew that they are free from heresy, and in strict union with the Catholic church. This creed has been usually read at the beginning of all the general councils since (a).

* Theod. E. H. l. I. c. viii.

(a) Broughton's Article, Nicene creed.

carried their creed, they proceeded to excommunicate Arius, and his followers, and banished Arius from Alexandria. They also condemned his book, called *Thalia*, which contained his explication of his own doctrine. After this they sent letters to Alexandria, and to the brethren in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, to acquaint them with their decrees; and to inform them, that the holy synod had condemned the opinions of Arius, and exhort them to rejoice for the good deeds they had done, in cutting off all manner of heresy. Constantine, after this, dismissed the council, (not without some donations to gratify their avarice) recommended to them peace and harmony, and to avoid animosity against such as might excel, or be inferior to them: he likewise wrote to several churches, recommending and enjoining an universal conformity to the council's decrees, both in doctrine and ceremonies, using this, among other arguments, that what they had decreed was the will of God, and that the agreement of so great a number of bishops was by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. But it is very natural to remark, after the anathemas and depositions agreed on by this council, which were the beginning of all the persecutions that afterwards raged, with how little propriety the dignity of inspiration was applied to them.

Many unhappy consequences very soon took place; for when the Emperor's recommending to the churches a submission to their decrees was not effectual, more violent measures were made use of; for out of his great zeal to extinguish heresy, he put forth public edicts against the authors and maintainers of it; against the Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, and others; ordained that the books written by any of them should be burnt; and if any kept them in their possession, or endeavoured to counteract his edict, they should, on conviction thereof, suffer death.

Thus the orthodox first brought in the punishment of heresy with death, and persuaded the emperor to destroy those whom they could not easily convert. The
scriptures

scriptures were now no longer the rule and standard of the Christian faith; orthodoxy and heresy were from henceforward to be determined by the decisions of councils and fathers, and religion to be propagated no longer by the apostolic methods of persuasion, forbearance, and the virtues of an holy life, but by imperial edicts and decrees; and heretical gainfayers not to be convinced, that they may be brought to the acknowledgement of the truth and be saved, but to be persecuted and destroyed. It is no wonder, that after this there should be a continual fluctuation of the public faith, just as the prevailing parties had the imperial authority to support them; or that we should meet with little else in ecclesiastical history but violence and cruelties, committed by men, who had left the simplicity of the Christian faith and profession, enslaved themselves to ambition and avarice, and had before them the ensnaring views of temporal grandeur, high preferments, and large revenues.

If one reads the complaints of the orthodox writers against the Arians, one would think the Arians the most execrable set of men that ever lived: but Socrates tells us, this was the practice of the bishops towards all they deposed, to accuse and pronounce them impious, but not to tell others the reasons why they accused them as such†.

Soon after these transactions, Arius died; and the manner of his death, as it was reported by the orthodox, Athanasius thinks of itself sufficient, fully to condemn the Arian heresy, and an evident proof that it was hateful to God. The Christians, however, being blessed with Christian emperors, were of opinion, that the divine providence had, in a signal manner, raised up and protected Constantine, for destroying the enemies of the church; but there is usually much of rashness and presumption, in supposing the calamities of sinners in this world are particular judgements of

God. Nor did Constantine himself long survive him. He was succeeded by his three sons, Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. Constantine, the eldest, recalled Athanasius from banishment, and restored him to his bishopric; upon which account there arose most grievous quarrels and seditions, many being killed, and several publicly whipped, by Athanasius's order, according to the accusations of his enemies. Constantius, after his elder brother's death, convened a synod at Antioch in Syria, where Athanasius was again deposed for these crimes, and Gregory put into the see of Alexandria. In this council a new creed was drawn up, in which the word *Consubstantial* was wholly omitted, and the expressions made use of so general, as that they might have been equally agreed to by the orthodox and Arians. In the close of it several anathema's were added, and particularly upon all who should teach, or preach, otherwise than what this council had received, because, as they themselves say, *They did really believe and follow all things delivered by the holy scriptures, both prophets and apostles.* So that now the whole Christian world was under a synodical curse, the opposite councils having damned one another, and all that differed from them; and if councils, as such, have any authority to anathematize all who will not submit to them, this authority equally belongs to every council; and therefore it was but a natural piece of revenge, that as the council of Nice had sent all the Arians to the devil, the Arians, in their turn, should take the orthodox along with them for company, and thus repay one anathema with another.

Constantius II. was warmly on the Arian side, and favoured the bishops of that party only, and ejected Paul, the orthodox bishop, from the see of Constantinople, as a person altogether unworthy of it. Macedonius being substituted in his room, who was in a different scheme, or at least expressed himself in different words, both from the orthodox and Arians, asserting that the Son was not consubstantial, not of the same,

same, but of a like substance with the Father, and openly propagated this opinion after he had thrust himself into the bishopric of Paul; this the orthodox party highly resented, and persecuted those who favoured that opinion.

The truth is, that the Christian clergy were now become the chief incendiaries and disturbers of the empire; and the pride of the bishops, and the fury of the people on each side, were now grown to such a height, as that there scarce ever was an election or restoration of a bishop in the larger cities, but it was attended with slaughter and blood, as it is evident from the accounts given by the ecclesiastical historians of Athanasius, Macedonius, and others, that they treated one another with the same implacable bitterness and severity as ever their common enemies, the heathens, treated them, as though they thought that persecution for conscience sake had been the distinguishing precept of the Christian religion*.

This was the unhappy state of the church in the reign of Constantius, which affords us little more than the history of councils and creeds differing from, and contrary to, each other; bishops deposing, censuring, and anathematizing their adversaries; and the Christian people, divided into factions under their respective leaders, for the sake of words they understood nothing of the sense of, and striving for victory, even unto bloodshed and death.

This occasioned much debate about the authority of councils and their liability to err in their decisions. It was suggested, that in a council convened by a Christian emperor, wherein some hundreds of prelates are assembled to decide a theological dispute, many are liable to be influenced by fear or dread of superiors of greater jurisdiction, either of falling under their displeasure of being reviled as heretics, or perhaps beggared and ruined by their refusing to be influenced by some active and do-

* Doctor Chandler's Hist. of Persecution, p. 36.

mincing spirits ; by a deference to the majority ; by a love of applause and respect ; by vanity and ambition ; by a total ignorance of the question in dispute, or a total indifference about it ; by private friendship ; by enmity and resentment ; by an indolent disposition ; by an aversion to disputes, or love of peace and quietness, &c. which whoever considers will be ready to conclude, there is no great deference to be paid to the authority of councils. Even the authority of councils themselves were zealously asserted by the council of Constance and Basil, and condemned by the Lateran ; nevertheless the dispute turned in favour of councils, and it was in general deemed heretical to speak against their authority. They who disclaim private judgement, and believe the infallibility of the church, act consistently in holding the infallibility of councils ; but they who take their faith from the scriptures, and not from the church, should be careful not to require nor to yield too much regard to such assemblies*.

We have a rule, by which we may with safety, and with satisfaction, judge of their authority ; a rule given us by our Master, *By their fruits ye shall know them.* We need only survey their acts and monuments, their behaviour, doctrines, decrees, and censures, and compare them impartially with the morality, the simplicity, the prudence, the charity of the gospel ; and by this we may judge of the authority of councils and fathers.

The forming of creeds or summary accounts of the Christian faith, till this century, were but few, and those concise, expressive only of the principal articles, and those not imposed on the churches ; but in process of time, when the empire became Christian, and the decisions of assembled bishops were made under the influence of the court, and then enforced by the secular arm, the creeds they drew up were no longer mere accounts of the principal doctrines for preserving a unity of faith, &c. but obtained the nature of decrees and

* Jortin's Remark on Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 55.

laws, henceforth precluding all private judgement, and under one shape or other binding the main body of the clergy, if not the whole Christian world. And indeed what St. Gregory Nazianzen thought of the council held in his time, that is to say, in the latter half of the fourth century, appears sufficiently from his letter Procopius—that he never saw a good ending of a synod—the spirit of contention, or the spirit of ambition, and love of rule, still gaining the ascendant over reason: nor does he except that council to which we are so far indebted for the Nicene creed, and which he himself, to his sorrow, was present. They fall, saith he, into factions, and fight for the sake of thrones, i. e. of episcopal fees, and divide the whole world in a lawless or irreligious manner*.

In the beginning of Julian's reign, A. D. 361. he behaved himself with great moderation towards the Christians; yet his hatred to them soon afterwards appeared so, that they were not permitted the education of their children, nor to be instructed in the Grecian language and learning. He taxed them very heavily, and exacted fines from such as would not sacrifice; and when the governors of the provinces took occasion, from thence, to increase the oppression, insomuch that persons of all ranks could not but complain of their cruel Julian answered, with a sneer, Your God hath commanded you to suffer persecution. And one of the reasons assigned for his severity was, that the Christian bishops shewed such a turbulent spirit, that he was obliged to have a jealous eye over them, and bear a stiff hand toward them. But the effects of his aversion to Christians did not last long, for he was killed in Persian wars, and reigned scarce two years.

Jovian succeeded him, who was a Christian both in principle and profession. But the bishops were soon tampering with him: Athanasius writes to him in favour of the Nicene creed, and endeavoured to pre-

* Greg. Naz. Epist. ad Procop.

upon him to persecute the Arians. A synod also of certain bishops met at Antioch, who, though they had before opposed the Nicene doctrine, finding that Jovian favoured it, with great obsequiousness readily subscribed it, and in a very complaisant letter represented that this true orthodox faith was the center of unity, while the followers of Macedonius, who rejected the word Consubstantial, sought to recommend themselves to his favour by the best representation they could give of their tenets. Jovian, who saw through the craft of those temporising bishops, answers, "I hate contention, and love those that study for peace;" declaring, he would trouble none on account of their faith, but would favour and esteem those who contributed to restore and preserve peace in the church. Themistius, the philosopher, very justly commended him on that account, and for despising the insinuations of those who would have persuaded him to violent methods in favour of a party, concerning whom, he said, they worshipped not God, but the purple *.

Valentinian and Valens, who succeeded him, embraced different parties in religion: the former, of the orthodox side, the latter, of the Arians. However, they both declared for liberty; but Valens soon suffered himself to be prevailed upon, by Eudoxus, bishop of Constantinople, to forsake both his opinion and his moderation. They obtained leave from him to hold a synod at Lampascus, where the orthodox carried their point, and deposed all the bishops of the Arian party †. This was so contrary to the moderation of Valens, that he was highly exasperated, who thereupon called a council of Arian bishops, and commanded those, who formed the council of Lampascus, to embrace the opinions of Eudoxus the Arian, and upon their refusal sent them into banishment, and gave their churches to their enemies, sparing only Paulinus for the remarkable sanctity

* Theod. lib. iv. c. iv.

† Sozimus, lib. vi. c. vii.

of his life. After this he entered into more violent measures, which the Arian bishops were accessory to.

In the mean time great disturbances happened at Rome upon Liberius's dying, who was bishop of that city. Ursinus, a Dean of that church, and Damasus, were nominated to succeed him; the party of Damasus prevailed, and got him chosen and ordained: Ursinus being enraged at it set up a separate meeting, got himself ordained by some other bishops; and this occasioned great disputes among the citizens for the episcopal dignity, and the matter was carried to such a height, that great numbers were murdered in the quarrel on both sides, no less than 137 persons being destroyed in the church itself, according to Ammianus *, who adds, "That it was no wonder to see those, who were ambitious of human greatness, contending with so much heat and animosity for that, because, when they had obtained it, they were sure to be enriched by the offerings of the matrons; of appearing abroad in great splendor; of being admired for their costly coaches, sumptuous in their feasts, outdoing sovereign princes in the expences of their tables, &c." This is said to be the first quarrel for the see of Rome, A. D. 366.

Gratian, who succeeded Valens, was of the orthodox party, and recalled those bishops he had banished, and particularly favoured and promoted the orthodox faith.

Theodosius, who succeeded him, was a zealous abettor of the orthodox party, and wrote a letter from Thessalonica to Constantinople, wherein he tells them that it was his pleasure that all his subjects should worship the Trinity as equal in divine honour: and where he could not persuade, he endeavoured to compel the bishops to assent to, and declare their faith in the Nicene creed, under the threats of expulsion from their churches: and the more effectually to extinguish the heresy, he summoned a council of bishops, in A. D. 383, to confirm that creed, and also made an addition to it, viz.

* Lib. xxvii. c. iii.

after the words Holy Ghost they inserted, *The Lord the quickner proceeding from the Father, whom with the Father and the Son we worship and glorify, and who spake by the Prophets* †.

The laws against heretics, collected in the Theodosian code, stand as a shameful monument of the persecuting Anti-christian spirit, which broke out in this century, and grew more and more violent in the following times, the Christians themselves imitating the cruelties of the Pagans *.

- Arcadius and Honorius, who were the sons and successors of Theodosius, embraced the orthodox religion and party, and confirmed the decrees of the former emperor. Chrysostom, who was bishop of Constantinople, persecuted the Arians. The Donatists in Africa persecuted the orthodox, and thus persecution seemed to know no end.

Thus we find the Arian doctrine was alternately (according to the disposition of the court) approved and condemned by many different councils. In this century, in the council of Alexandria, in the year 322, Arian and his followers were excommunicated in the council of Bythinia; two years afterwards they were declared orthodox; two years afterwards condemned and anathematized in the council of Nice; and in the year 359 their sentiments were again approved and justified in the council of Seleucia; and about 400 Western bishops in the council of Rimini, who first, indeed, condemned the Arians with great rigour, afterwards, in contradiction to their own former judgement, subscribed the Arian confession of faith ‖.

The doctrine of an absolute unconditional predestination of all events prevailed much in the Eastern church. Some authors conceive it was much more primitive, and would fain make it to commence from the aposto-

† An abstract from Dr. Chandler's *History of Persecution*.

* Jortin's *Remarks on Eccles. Hist.* p. 245.

‖ Gale's *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 711

lic age ; but as it is inconsistent with the principal doctrines of the Romish church, we think there is not sufficient authority to charge them with it. The reader may see the arguments in support of it *.

Many superstitious customs debased the purity of the Christian church in this century.—The making crosses of wood, metal, and in painting, were brought in by the emperor Constantine, who caused a cross to be made and displayed as his imperial banner, and from thence it became a fashionable ornament in a house, a token of loyalty, and of the orthodox or true catholic church †. —Pilgrimages and visits paid under pretences of devotion to certain places called holy, such as the temple at Jerusalem and the Viaticum at Rome, took place in this century, but they did not carry it to such height as to imagine there was any real merit in it, as appears from the confession of St. Jerom —Giving the eucharist to children became a custom about the close of this century in the Bohemian and other Western churches, and did soon after prevail in the Eastern or Greek churches. The custom of baptizing infants had been founded on the interpretation of John iii. 3, 5, and this practice of giving the sacrament to children was founded on an explication of John vi. 53. Thus were *baptism* and the *sacrament* thought indispensable to salvation : the practice of giving the eucharist continued in the Western churches till the eleventh or twelfth century, when it was laid aside upon the new doctrine of transubstantiation : and in many of the Greek churches the eucharist is still given to children ‡. But, on the other hand, some were of opinion, that to defer baptism, till there was an apparent danger of death, was most safe, under an apprehension that sins, committed after baptism, would scarcely be forgiven.

* In Calvin's Institutes, or in Dr. Gill's Cause of God and Truth, vol. iii. latter end.

† Chamier, tom. ii. lib. ii. cap. iv.

‡ See Wall's Hist. and Peirce's Essay on giving the Eucharist to Children, p. 6. and Æneas Sylvius's Epistle, cxxx.

The tenth persecution of the Christians began at Nicomedia, Feb. 13, 303, and continued for ten years, ending June 13, 313, by an edict of Constantine and Licinius *.

C E N T U R Y T H E F I F T H .

In the fifth century we find the church of Rome made very considerable efforts to enlarge her power. Till about the year 432 the history of the popes was merely ecclesiastical, but from hence the affairs of the church were so interwoven with those of the state, that their history is both ecclesiastical and civil. The popes soon made a different figure from that which they had hitherto made: no longer mere bishops, but bishops and princes, and the bishop almost entirely lost in the prince; no longer contending only with their colleagues for spiritual power and jurisdiction, but at the same time with the greatest monarchs for dominion; nay, employing the sword as well as the keys, and heading, as directed by their ambition or interest, both councils and armies †.

However, it is not only true that the patriarchs were hitherto looked upon or considered as equal; that the bishop of Rome held the other bishops to be his brethren and colleagues; but the name and idea of an universal bishop was deemed a contradiction and a mark of Anti-christ ‡.

Infallibility was not yet assumed as the prerogative of the pope; and if it had, one would think several remarkable occurrences and facts in this century might be sufficient to convince the most prejudiced in favour of papal power, of its absurdity.

Innocent, who was bishop of Rome, 402, grievously persecuted the Novatians, and, as Socrates observes ||,

* Blair.

† Bower's Hist. of the Pope's, vol. i. p. 411.

‡ Walch's Hist. of the Popes.

|| Lib. vii. c. ix.

was the first bishop of that see, who disturbed them.—Celestine, one of his successors, imitated his injustice, and deprived the Novatians of the remainder of their churches, and not content with depriving them of their churches, prevented their private assembling, and even plundered them of all their substance.—Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, shewed himself a violent persecutor soon after his election: addressing himself to the emperor before the whole congregation, he said, *Purge me, O emperor, the earth from heretics, and I will give thee the kingdom of heaven; conquer with me the heretics, and I will conquer with thee the Persians*; and agreeable to his declaration, in five days after his consecration, attempted to set fire to the church of the Arians when they were assembled in it for prayer.*—Few of the bishops were free from this wicked spirit. Socrates, indeed, excepts Atticus, bishop of Constantinople, who behaved much more mildly and gently; and Proclus also, who was brought up under Atticus, who was gentle towards all men, from a persuasion, that this was a much more proper method than violence to reduce heretics to the true faith: and in this he imitated Theodosius the emperor, sometimes called Theodosius II. who was not at all displeased that any should differ from him in sentiments. But under the reign of this emperor the Arians also, in their turn, used the orthodox with no greater moderation, burnt churches, put orthodox bishops to death, seized their books, and committed a variety of outrages for suppression of the orthodox faith †.

During these transactions, Nestorius the persecuted bishop of Constantinople, though tolerably sound in the doctrine of the real Deity of the Logos, yet excepted against the Virgin Mary being called the Mother of God. This occasioned a council to be convened at Ephesus, A. D. 434, of which Cyril was president,

* Abstract from Dr. Chandler's Hist. of Persecution, p. 44.

† Socrates, ch. ii. p. 41.

and, as he hated Nestorius, he persuaded the bishops of his party to decree, that the Virgin was, and should be the Mother, and to anathematize all who should not confess her in this character.

Marcian, the successor of Theodosius in the empire, embraced the orthodox party and opinions, and was very desirous to bring about an entire uniformity in the worship of God. Agreeably to this his temper, Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, addressed him, soon after his promotion, in these words; *God hath justly given you the empire that you should govern all for the universal welfare, and for the peace of his holy church.* The legates of Leo, bishop of Rome, presented him their accusations against Dioscorus, as did also Eusebius, beseeching the emperor that what he had advanced might be judged of, and determined by a synod. Marcian consented, and ordered the bishops to meet first at Nice, and afterwards at Chalcedon. This was the fourth general council, A. D. 454, consisting of near 600 prelates: the principal cause of their assembling was the Eutychian heresy, viz. *That Jesus Christ consisted of two natures before his incarnation, but that after this he had one nature only: he also denied that the body of Christ was of the same substance with ours.* This council condemned his opinions as heretical, and expelled him from the bishopric of Alexandria, and proceeded to settle the faith according to the Nicene creed, the opinions of the fathers, and the doctrine of Athanasius, Cyril, Celestine, Hilarius, Basil, Gregory, and Leo; and decreed that Christ was truly God and truly man, consubstantial to the Father as to his deity, and consubstantial to us as to his humanity; and that it should not be lawful for any persons to utter or write, or compose, or think, or teach, any other faith whatsoever.

Leo succeeded Marcian, and zealously endeavoured to promote the orthodox faith.—But, under Zeno, the son-in-law and successor to Leo, notwithstanding his uniting and pacifying edict, great differences arose, and persecutions were commenced against the orthodox.

Anastasius, who succeeded Zeno, was himself a great lover of peace, and endeavoured to promote it both amongst the clergy and laity, and therefore ordered that there should be no innovation in the church whatsoever. But this moderation was by no means pleasing to the monks and bishops: some of them were great sticklers for the council of Chalcedon, and would not allow a single word of their decrees to be altered, nor communicate with those who did not receive them: others were so far from submitting to this synod, that they anathematized it; whilst others adhered to the pacific edict, and maintained peace with one another, even though they were of different judgement concerning the nature of Christ. Hence the church was divided into factions, so that the bishops would not communicate with each other: not only the Eastern bishops separated from the Western, but those of the same province had schisms among themselves. The emperor, to prevent as much as possible these quarrels, banished those who were most remarkably troublesome from their sees: but the monks and bishops frustrated all his attempts for peace, by forcing one another to make new confessions and subscriptions, and by anathematizing all who differed from them, as heretics: they also treated the emperor himself with great insolence, and excommunicated him as an enemy to the synod of Chalcedon*.

The Athanasian creed, as it is called, we shall just mention in this place, as the consubstantial doctrine, that is to say, that the substance or essence of the Son and Spirit were the same in kind, or rather species, with that of God the Father, so generally prevailed about this time; though the creed now called Athanasian had not then acquired that name, but was simply stiled the Catholic faith, and did not consist of the same articles as at present†.

Under

* An abstract from Dr. Chandler's Hist. of Persecution, p. 51.

† Vossius and other learned writers have sufficiently proved that it was none of his;—that it was originally a Latin composition, and

Under the emperor Anastasius, Symmachus, bishop of Rome, expelled the Manichees from the city, and ordered their books to be publicly burnt before the doors of the church; and other persecutions were practised against them.

The Pelagian heresy (as it was called) sprung up in this century, and made no small progress; it consisted principally in asserting the absolute freedom of the human will; which occasioned a council to be held at Carthage in 412 and 417, and at Mileva and at Rome in 416.

Platina tells us, that amongst many other ceremonies introduced by pope Sixtus III. in this century, they beautified and adorned the churches, and placed upon the altar of St. Peter a golden image of our Saviour, enriched with jewels.

The prohibiting priests to marry, was instituted by pope Innocent, A. D. 410.

and by a Latin author;—that it cannot be carried higher than the very close of the sixth century. Many writers of credit, especially Pascaſius Queſnel, an eminent French divine, ascribe it to Virgilius Tapsiensis in this century, who was famous for his forging many books under the names of the fathers. Dupin favours this supposition, and says all the world knows it was not Athanasius's (a). Bishop Burnet, in his Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 107, says, as it was none of his, so it was never established by any general council till 1123. Dr. Scott says, some part of it is inconsistent with the most genuine writings of Athanasius. Dr. Cudworth says, as this creed asserts the three persons not specifically, but numerically the same, it seems not to be owned by any public authority, save that of the Lateran council in 1123. Dr. Waterland, in his Critical History of this creed, attributes the composing of it to Hillary, bishop of Arles; and that before A. D. 670, the name of Athanasius was not given to it.—As to the reception of this creed, it was received in France in the time of Hincmar, A. D. 850,—at Spain about A. D. 950, and in Germany much about the same time—in England likewise in the tenth century—at Verona, in Italy, 1014; and as to the Greek and Oriental churches, it is not certain that any of them ever received it (b).

The history of Czar Peter the Great mentions, it was introduced into some of the churches of Russia the last century, as a novelty picked up in his travels to France.

(a) *Dupin's Eccles. Hist. tom. II. p. 34.*

(b) *See Athanasian Forgeries.*

And the baptizing with sureties, or godfathers and godmothers, became a custom in this century*.

The sign of the cross in baptism was likewise introduced into the church of Rome, the beginning of this century.

Giving the eucharist to children, introduced at the close of the last, was a matter of dispute all this century: it occasioned the first council at Toledo, 438, who left the matter undetermined: the second council, held in 675, determined in favour of it, and attempted to explain what had been before ambiguously delivered concerning it†.

Christianity was propagated in Scotland the latter end of this century, by the direction of pope Celestine 415‡.

CENTURY THE SIXTH.

In the sixth century, the church never considered the pope as head of all the churches in the world: he was a patriarch, and had the chief place among his brethren, because he resided at Rome; and hitherto they seemed to desire no more; and though he arrogated to himself that pre-eminence, he was ingenuous enough to acknowledge, that the privilege was of human origin: and they were not wanting to preserve this authority among the people by a pomp and splendor, as indecent as the arrogant style, which some of them affected||.

The infallibility of the pope of Rome was unknown as yet, amidst the enormities, errors, and contradictions, of several of them: it would, indeed, have been a ridiculous inconsistency, to give oracular authority to the sentences of such men.

The superiority of councils to the pope was therefore a point hitherto not disputed: the popes themselves de-

* Madg. cent. 5, ch. iv. p. 656, quoted by Delaune.

† Pierce's, Essay, p. 9.

‡ Camden.

|| St. Jerom records a memorable saying of Pretextatus, a pagan, at this time: "Make me a bishop of Rome, and I will immediately become a Christian."

fired such assemblies, and declared, that so far from having a power of altering their decrees, that on the contrary, their own opinions and doctrines were to be subjected to the examination of councils. It was, indeed, a rule, that the bishop obtained his office by election; but the corruption of the times was such, that money had frequently a great share in it. The bishop was then subject to the civil magistrates of Rome, and acknowledged, as his sovereign, the emperor of Rome, and afterwards the kings of Italy. It also appears from the canon law, that the usages of the Roman church, and the letters and epistles of the popes, gradually acquired the authority of laws §.

Very early in this century, the notion of the popes independency on councils was first broached: the occasion of which was, that some crimes were laid to the charge of Symmachus, then bishop of Rome. His friends in the council pretended, "*That no assembly of bishops had a power to judge the pope, and that he was accountable for his actions to God alone,*" which was unanswerably confuted as soon as broached. One of the council immediately observed, they were convened for that purpose, and he was for that end summoned to appear before them.

Justin, who ascended the imperial throne, A. D. 518, revived the persecutions, as a mark of his greater zeal for orthodoxy than his predecessor: Anastasius Severus, bishop of Antioch, being warm against the council of Chalcedon, the emperor ordered his tongue to be cut out. Platina also tells us, that he banished the Arians, and gave their churches to the orthodox. Hormisdas also, bishop of Rome, after the example of Symmachus, banished the remainder of the Manichees, and caused their writings to be burnt.

Justinian, his successor, succeeded him also in his zeal for the council of Chalcedon, and banished the bishops of Constantinople and Antioch, because they would not obey his orders.—He published a law, that there should

be no pagan or heretic in his empire, allowing three months only for their conversion: by another, he rendered them incapable of being witnesses in any trial against Christians: he likewise prohibited the transcribing any heretical book, upon the punishment of losing both their hands. These laws were principally enacted at the instigation of the orthodox bishops. Thus Agapetus, bishop of Rome, who had condemned Anthimus, and deposed him from his see of Constantinople, persuaded Justinian to banish all those whom he had condemned for heresy. But notwithstanding all his zeal for orthodoxy, and the cruel edicts he published for the extirpation of heresy, he was infamously covetous; sold the provinces of the empire to plunderers and oppressors, stripped the wealthy of their estates upon false accusations. Evagrius * likewise charges him with a variety of other unheard-of cruelties, and unnatural vices.

During the reign of Justinian, in the 24th year of it, was held the fifth general council at Constantinople, A. D. 553, consisting of about 165 fathers. The occasion of their meeting was the opposition that was made to the four former general councils, and particularly the writings of Origen, which Eustochius, bishop of Jerusalem, accused, as full of many dangerous errors. In the first sessions it was debated, whether *those, who were dead, were to be anathematized?* One Eutychius looked with contempt on the fathers for their hesitation in so plain a matter, and told them, that there needed no deliberation about it; for that king Josias formerly did not only destroy the idolatrous priests who were living, but dug also those, who had been dead long before, out of their graves. So clear a determination of the point, who could resist? The fathers were immediately convinced, and Justinian caused him to be consecrated bishop of Constantinople, in the room of Menas, just deceased, for this his skill in scripture and casuistry. The consequence was, that the decrees of the four preceding

* Evagrius, lib. iv. ch. xxxii. Platina. Dr. Chandler's History of Persecution, p. 52.

councils were all confirmed; those who were condemned them, re-condemned and anathematized; particularly Theodorus, bishop of Mopsuestia, and Ibas, with their writings, as favouring the impieties of Nestorius; finally, Origen, with all his detestable and execrable principles, and all persons whatsoever, who should think speak of them, or dare to defend them. After these satisfactions the synod sent an account of them to Justinian, whom they complimented with the title of *the best Christian King, and with having a soul partaker of heavenly nobility*; and yet soon after these flatteries, most christian majesty turned heretick himself, and favoured, with as much zeal, to propagate heresy, as he had done orthodoxy before: he published an edict, which he ordained, *That the body of Christ was immutable, and incapable even of natural and innocent passions; that before his death he eat in the same manner as he after his resurrection, receiving no conversion or change in his very formation in the womb, neither in his voluntary or natural affections, nor after his resurrection.* But as he was endeavouring to force the bishops to receive this creed, God was pleased, as Evagrius observes, to turn him off.

But after the year 560, the bishops being become the absolute dispensers of the fourth part of the goods of the church, they began to employ more of their care in their temporal affairs, and to make parties in the cities; so that elections were no longer carried on with a view to the service of God, but managed by faction and intrigues, which often proceeded to open violence. This gave the first alarm to princes, who had hitherto little concerned themselves in the choice of the ministry. Moved, therefore, partly by religious considerations, and partly by reasons of state, they now began not to suffer the clergy and people to determine elections by themselves, and according to their own passions: for they began no longer avoiding and flying from bishops, but even making interest for them by all the artful and skilful solicitations they could use, so
great

great a contest opened the way to seditions. These proceedings produced an edict, that no person elected should be consecrated without the approbation of the prince, reserving to themselves the right of confirming the great bishoprics, such as those in Italy, of Rome, Ravenna, and Milan. In this manner, that is, with the imperial sanction, the popes and bishops continued to be chosen. Through all the history of Gregory of Tours, from the time of Clowis, the first Christian king of France, until the year 590, we find no instance of any one bishop being made in any other manner, than by the nomination or consent of the king. It was easy for those bishops, when once they were made without the authority of the people, to exclude the people also from the choice of priests and deacons, and other ecclesiastical ministers, and to transfer that right to the emperor or prince alone: and thus the succession of bishops and clergy became greatly irregular; and, instead of being chosen and set apart to their respective offices by the people, whom they were appointed to watch over and minister unto, according to reason and ancient usage, they were set apart by those invested with civil power.

And notwithstanding this order and method was broke through in after-times by arbitrary measures, it appears that, so late as the year 590, the pope was not deemed lawful pope till his election was confirmed by the emperor: hence Gregory the Great, being chosen by a great majority, but desirous to decline that dignity, wrote to the emperor Mauritius, intreating him to refuse his consent, that the electors might thereby be obliged to chuse another. The person chosen was also stiled Elect, not Bishop, and yielded the first place in the church to the arch priest*.

Under Mauritius, John, bishop of Constantinople, in a council held in that city, stiled himself Oecumenical Bishop, by the consent of the fathers there assembled;

* Bower's History of the Popes, vol. II. p. 265.

and the emperor himself ordered Gregory to acknowledge him in that character. Gregory absolutely refused it, and replied, that the power of binding and loosing was delivered to Peter and his successors, and not to the bishops of Constantinople; admonishing him to take care, that he did not provoke the anger of God against himself, by raising tumults in his church. This pope was the first who stiled himself, *Servus Servorum Dei*, Servant of the Servants of God; and had such an abhorrence of the title of Universal Bishop, that he said, "I confidently affirm, than whosoever calls himself Universal Priest, is the fore-runner of Antichrist, by thus proudly exalting himself above others."

But however modest Gregory was in refusing and condemning this arrogant title, Boniface III. thought better of the matter; and, after great struggles, prevailed with Phocas, who murdered Mauritius, the emperor, to declare, that the see of the blessed apostle Peter, which is the head of all churches, should be so called and accounted by all, and the bishop of it Oecumenical or Universal Bishop. The church of Constantinople had claimed this precedence and dignity, and was sometimes favoured herein by the emperors, who declared, that the first see ought to be in that place which was the head of the empire. The Roman pontiffs, on the other hand, affirmed that Rome, of which Constantinople was but a colony, ought to be esteemed the head of the empire; because the Greeks themselves, in their writings, stile the emperor, Roman Emperor, and the inhabitants of Constantinople are called Romans, and not Greeks; not to mention that Peter, the prince of the apostles, gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to his successors, the popes of Rome. On this foundation was the superiority of the church of Rome, to that of all other churches, built: and Phocas, who was guilty of all villainies, was one of the fittest persons that could be found to gratify Boniface in this request. Boniface also called a council

at Rome, where this supremacy was confirmed, and by whom it was decreed, that bishops should be chosen by the clergy and people, approved by the prince of the city, and ratified by the pope with these words, *volumus et jubemus*, for this is our will and command. To reward Phocas for the grant of the primacy, he approved the murder of Mauritius, and very honourably received his images, which he sent to Rome; and, having thus wickedly possessed themselves of this unrighteous power, the popes as wickedly used it, soon brought almost the whole Christian world into subjection to them, and became the persecutors general of the church of God, proceeding from one usurpation to another, till at last they brought emperors, kings, and princes, into subjection, forcing them to ratify their unjust decrees, and to punish, in the severest manner, all that should presume to oppose and contradict them, till she became *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*†. Pretty early in this century persecutions recommenced at Rome against the Manichees.

The custom of anathematizing persons after death was introduced from apresumption, that all those whom they anathematized, and condemned as heretics, their sentence would be confirmed by the Supreme Being; but others more modestly pleaded only for its being their duty to shew their disapprobation of heretics, as well dead as living.

This was one part of the contest called the Three Chapters, which occasioned the meeting of several councils in this century. The second was concerning the writings of Theodoret against Cyril; and the third was concerning the letter of Ibas to the pope, whether orthodox or not*.

The dignity of the clergy of all ranks was a point much insisted on. Pope Felix, A. D. 528, asserted,

† Chandler's History of Persecution, p. 55.

* Bower's History of the Popes, vol. II. p. 401.

that the clergy were by divine right exempted from the power of the civil magistrate, and their misconduct only cognizable by, and liable to, the censure of the church, and the synods of each diocese and province §.

It likewise became a dispute, whether a pope, who is not true (that is, rightly elected and constituted) can be infallible. This was occasioned by two popes being chosen at the same time, viz. Boniface II. and Dioscorus, A. D. 530; but the great quarrel was terminated by the death of Dioscorus ||.

Praying to the virgin Mary was received as a laudable practice by the Romish church, and many attributes ascribed to her †.

Purgatory was a device of St. Austin's in this century; but he both said and unsaid it, and at last, like a wise schoolman, left it doubtful. The papists were greatly divided about it; and it is more properly said to be a new doctrine started by him, than received as an article of faith in the Romish church in this century.

Praying for the dead was a practice that prevailed at the latter end of this century: a novelty of pope Gregory I. who likewise introduced the procession of the host, A. D. 592. Indulgences were also granted by him in the year 600, but not in the manner or for the purposes as they were soon after, and now in general, understood, being then occasionally granted to Christians, when they had fallen into any heinous crime, either in denying their faith, or sacrificing to idols, through the fear of, or actual suffering, persecution; and for which, being enjoined a long penance, the pope had power to mitigate, which power of mitigation was called indulgence †.

The author of the *History of Popery* ||, speaking of the progress of popish doctrines and ceremonies, says,

§ Bower's *History of the Popes*, vol. II. p. 325.

|| *Ibid.* 327.

† *Hist. Popery*, vol. I. p. 87. See also *The Blessed Virgin's Psalter*, as it is called, composed by Bonaventure, a cardinal of the Romish church.

† Dupin.

|| In two vol. 4to. printed in 1735, vol. I. p. 134.

“ that hitherto papal indulgences, as now understood, were not so much as heard of—purgatory fire was unkindled—their mass was yet unmoulded—transubstantiation unthought of—the doctrine of merits untaught—the cup in the sacrament not denied to the laity ; and not till long after that prayers were made with the people in an unknown tongue : but from hence we behold the church in her declining state ; knowledge decayed, superstition usurped the place of zeal, and both princes and prelates were more busied in ornamenting churches, or building nunneries, &c. than in raising up living stones, and edifying God’s spiritual temple.”

CENTURY THE SEVENTH.

In this century we meet with many remarkable occurrences.—At the beginning of it, Mellitus, the first bishop of London, in consequence of the high dignity to which he was advanced, went to Rome, as Bede informs us, to consult with the pope concerning the affairs of the English church ; on which occasion Boniface called a council of the Italian bishops, at which the bishop of London attended or assisted, and when it broke up, returned to London with the decrees of that court.

Pope Boniface shewed no small zeal in propagating the Christian religion in Great Britain ; but, at the same time, he took care to introduce an undue veneration for the papal robes, for the authority and dignity of the sovereign pontiff, and for a variety of ceremonies which defaced the simplicity of the gospel. This pope’s pall was first sent into England to Justus, who, in the year 624, succeeded Mellitus in the see of Canterbury ; and the number of bishops were greatly increased, as well as of inferior clergy, who received their ordination from the bishop of Canterbury, by virtue of that great dignity which had been delegated to him by the pope.

Another point aimed at was, to increase a veneration for the clergy, insomuch that pretty early in this century

tury the clergy acquired a very great ascendancy over the people, and they voluntarily imparted a considerable share of their worldly substance, especially in some of the capital cities, as well as Rome, which in each city made one capital stock ; and this was not divided between them and the poor, but was appropriated to the priest, and other collections were made for the poor : these capital stocks were called Patrimonies ; a name not denoting any dominion or jurisdiction belonging to the Roman church, or the pope, but to signify the estate of every church, and was distinguished from the patrimonies of private men, as we find in many places of the 12th book of the Code*.

And to create a greater respect for the estates belonging to the church, it was usual to annex the name of some favourite saint which that church held in great veneration ; so the estates of the church of Ravenna were called the patrimony of St. Apollinare ; that of Milan, the patrimony of St. Ambrose ; and the estates of the Roman church, the patrimony of St. Peter in Ambruzzo.

The bulk of ecclesiastical historians fix the year 606 for the title of universal bishop, being conferred by way of pre-eminence on the pontiff of Rome ; a dignity which had been assumed by the bishop of Constantinople, and by others in the last century, but was now confirmed to pope Boniface III. who, being elected pope, prevailed on the emperor Phocas to take the title of universal bishop from the bishop of Constantinople, and to grant it to him, and his successors, by his absolute decree, which passed for that purpose. His taking upon him this authority, or dignity, was thought the more extraordinary, as his immediate predecessor but one, and probably, the best and the greatest, so often condemned it in any bishop whatsoever, and rejected it with indignation, when offered to himself, as vain, proud, impious, blasphemous and antichristian. But

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p.

no sooner had they brought that ecclesiastical power to its highest pitch, than they began to extend their views, to join insensibly the temporal and the spiritual power; nor did their boundless ambition allow them, or the world, any rest, till they got themselves acknowledged for universal monarchs, as well as universal bishops, over all where they had any jurisdiction.

The church of Scotland were much divided in their sentiments concerning the time of keeping Easter, and were with much difficulty reduced to the celebration of it according to the practice of the church of Rome.

About the year 634 commenced that grand dispute, which made so much noise in the East, whether there were in Christ two operating wills, the one human, the other divine, or only one will and one operation: this occasioned a general dissention, and the convention of several councils, and in the fifth and last session of the Lateran, A. D. 637, under the more immediate direction of pope Honorius, it was concluded in favour of one will. But this did not terminate the dispute.

However, about the year 646 another dispute intervened in regard to the titles and authority of the pope, the African bishop having addressed Theodore the pope in a very high stile, calling him father of fathers and the supreme pontiff of all bishops: the new primate of Constantinople wrote to him as his brother, and concluded with saying, the apostles had all an equal share of power and of honour. This dispute subsided for a time, and gave place to the revival of the former.

In 649 a council was called by Martin, bishop of Rome, concerning the two natures and two operations in Christ, and the doctrine of one will and one operation condemned and anathematized †. The form as follows: — “ I Martin, by the mercy of God, bishop of the holy catholic and apostolic church of the city of Rome, have signed as judge this definition, con-

|| Bower's History of the Popes, v. ii. p. 550.

† Ibid. vol. iii. p. 49.

firming the orthodox faith, and condemning Theodorus, formerly bishop of Pharan, Cyrus of Alexandria, Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul of Constantinople, and their heretical writings, with the impious ec̄thesis and the impious type."

This authoritative definition and decree gave great umbrage, and did not soon subside; for it appears, that the authority of the pope, so late as the year 669, was a matter of dispute: it was not acknowledged in Italy itself without the limits of the Suburbicarian provinces, the ancient limits of the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome. Maurus, bishop of Ravenna, being soon after summoned by Vitalianus, to Rome, to give an account of his faith and his conduct, not only refused to obey the summons, but let the pope know that he had no authority over him or his see. This unexpected answer provoked Vitalianus to such a degree, that he immediately thundered against Maurus the sentence of excommunication; but of his excommunication he made no more account than he made of his summons; nay, thinking he had as good a right to excommunicate the pope as the pope had to excommunicate him, he retorted the sentence, and excommunicated him in his turn, which was thought a crime of so atrocious a nature, that he was stripped of his priesthood and reduced to the state of a layman: but the bishop of Ravenna being supported by the exarch, he continued, in spite of the pope to exercise all the functions of his office till his death, and then left it in charge with his last breath, never to submit to the undue power assumed by the pope, which was strictly adhered to by his successor*.

In 680, when Agatho was bishop of Rome, another council was held at Constantinople on the errors of the Monothelites, in a spacious hall of the imperial palace, called from the form of the building Trulla, that is, Cupola, from whence it has sometimes that name: it

* Bowers's History of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 87.

consisted of 166 bishops. It was moved at their first session, that the opinions of the fathers should be carefully and diligently consulted, in order to determine this point with greater certainty; and accordingly the ten first sessions were spent in examining passages out of the fathers and approved councils; and in the 18th session was read, and approved, and signed, the definition and decree of the council, first acknowledging they received the five general councils; then they anathematized the impious and execrable doctrine of one will, and the abettors of it, among whom was Honorius, bishop of Rome, Cyrus of Alexandria, Macarius of Antioch, and others; and in the conclusion the imperial edict was read, requiring all the subjects of the empire to conform in their belief to the present edict, on pain of being deposed, if ecclesiastics; forfeiting their honour and estates, if laymen of rank and distinction; and if private persons, to be banished the city of Constantinople and all other cities in the empire. This severe edict was founded on that doctrine being repugnant to the faith of the holy catholic and apostolic church, and the opinion of the fathers.

Such was the conduct and conclusion of the sixth general council, declared to be of equal authority with the council of Nice, or any other council, and their decrees; according to pope Gregory the Great, equal with the gospels themselves; but by this council the infallibility of the pope is irreconcilable with that of the council, Honorius the pope being thereby condemned as a heretic, his books ordered to be burnt, and he over and over anathematized. Hence it is observed by some authors, that one would think the papal infallibility would be given up by all who pretend to acknowledge the authority and infallibility of this council.

It is also remarked, as the conclusions of this council were principally founded on the authority of the fathers, this introduced such a veneration for them, that their authority was almost universally asserted to be the rule of faith and doctrine, anathematizing all who do

not from the heart believe, and with the mouth profess, every thing delivered by the fathers *; notwithstanding, as our author asserts, they must then believe the most absurd and contradictory doctrines, doctrines even repugnant to scripture, to reason, and common sense †. For the primitive fathers went very far in superstition, even so as to imitate the gentiles in their worship of dæmons; for they canonized saints, and honoured their relics; they varied the mode of baptism by suffusion, trine immersion; introduced exorcism; Chrism gave milk and honey to the new baptised, and in the eucharist they mingled water with wine, gave the sacrament to children, and this continued to be the practice of the church to the twelfth century ‡.

Pope Gregory I. who was so remarkable for superstition and invention, as to be surnamed the Great, in-

* Bower's History of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 15. Baillet, concerning the Right Use of the Fathers, lib. ii. chap. iv.—An Essay on Scripture Prophecy, Prin. 1724 (a).

† St. Austin prayed for the dead, for the soul of his mother Monica, and held, that prayers for the good were thanksgivings—for those not very bad, propitiations; for those very bad, though of no use to the dead, a comfort to the living.—St. Ambrose prayed for the soul of Theodosius;—St. Gregory for the soul of Trajan;—St. Chrysostom joined to his prayers for the dead, alms and oblations;—St. Austin introduced the veneration of the relics of saints, affirming miracles had been wrought by them;—St. Jerom defended the adoration of them. To omit many others, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Gregory Nyssen, St. Ambrose, St. Jerom, St. Austin, St. Theodoret, St. Fulgentius, St. Gregory the Great, St. Leo, and more have prayed to the saints (b). St. Cyprian, and a whole council with him condemned the baptism administered by such as they deemed heretics.—Origen, through too much compassion of the wicked, asserted that the devils themselves, after a severe punishment, should at length be saved.—And none exceeded Tertullian in an undue veneration for the church. “If thou fearest heaven will be shut against thee, says he, remember that Christ gave the keys to Peter and by him to the church (c).”

‡ See Delaun's Plea for the Nonconformists, and his Authorities, p. 33, and Dr. Mead before quoted.

(a) Mead's *Apostasy of Later Times*.

(b) See Thorndyke, in *Epil. Part iii.* p. 358.

(c) Sir Peter King, p. 114, who cites his *Scorpiac*, p. 612.

introduced the doctrine of purgatory; and amongst other devices of the church of Rome in this century, the bishops of Rome were first honoured with the triple crown.—It was required that the traditions of the Romish church should be deemed as sacred, as if delivered by the mouth of St. Peter himself.—The heathen temples (sacred to God) were dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and to other nominal saints, and it was decreed that the church should be an asylum to all who fled to it, though guilty of the greatest crimes.—No man was to marry a woman to whom his father had been godfather in baptism:—abstinence from certain meats and drinks on certain days was deemed meritorious:—all saints-day instituted by Boniface IV. A. D. 610, and the number of feasts greatly augmented:—the feast of the circumcision:—the feast of the purification:—the annunciation of the Virgin Mary:—and the feast of the deposition or sleep of the Virgin Mary fixed to the 15th of August, and the practice of fasting on Saturdays forbidden on pain of excommunication for the laity, and deposition of the clergy*.—But amongst other things, the Lord's prayer was decreed to be read in their public worship at Rome, and was, soon after, enjoined on all the churches 618 || ||; and organs were first brought into the Christian church by pope Vitalianus, about the year 660 †.

The sixth general council, held at Constantinople in 680, decreed, that Jesus Christ should be painted in a human form upon the cross, which picture of him should be put up in churches to represent, in the most lively manner imaginable to all Christians, the death and passion of our Blessed Saviour: at other times he was delineated in the form of a lamb, and the Holy Ghost by that of a dove **. Private masses became

|| Dupin, Picart, History of Popery, 2 vols. 4to.

* Bower's History of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 153.

|| History of Popery, vol. i.

† Norman on Church Music, p. 37.

** Picart's Ceremonies, vol. i. p. 347.

more frequent, and they gave the communion in both kinds with leavened bread. Another council was held in 692 at Trullo; they made 102 canons, most of them of a trifling nature, others very severe and oppressive to such as differed in points of faith or discipline *.

Theodore, as he expresses it, had the satisfaction, before he died, of seeing most if not all the novel doctrines and Romish ceremonies established all over England, and the churches of the Scotch establishment, in this century †.

CENTURY THE EIGHTH.

In the Eighth century we have many melancholy instances of the great corruption in the Christian church.

The number of church-officers was, indeed, in some measure fixed, and the several orders of archbishops, bishops, deans, canons, curates, &c. &c. in a manner pretty near to what subsists at present in the Romish church ‖.

The pope now assumed to himself the power of disposing of the pall independently of the emperors, and declared by repeated decrees, it was unlawful for a metropolitan archbishop or primate to exercise any branch of his power till he had received his pall from Rome; and in several decrees the metropolitanical jurisdiction and power were said to be conferred by the pall §.

Gregory III. in 734, by a solemn sentence, deprived the emperor Leo, both of his empire and the communion of the faithful, because he would not admit of the worship of images †. Pope Leo III. set the imperial crown on the head of Charlemagne, all the people crying out, To Charles Augustus, crowned of God

* Dupin, seventh Century.

† Bower's History of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 156.

‖ Rolin's Introduction to the Lives of the Reformers, p. vii.

§ Bower's History of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 7.

‡ History of Popery, vol. I, p. 138.

great and peaceable emperor of the Romans, long life and victorious (after which salutations the emperor adored the pope himself by kissing his feet). The pope gladly approved the acclamations and homage paid by the people, especially as he saw by his being instrumental in investing the emperor with such dignity, he thereby insured to himself greater power, dignity, and influence.

This is the latest date of the commencement of the Anti-Christian reign, 756; the papal see having then established its temporal jurisdiction by being invested with the exarchate of Ravenna || ||.

In Italy, where the wealth of the monasteries had not made them considerable before the year 750, they had passed unregarded by the Gothic kings, the emperors and the kings of Lombardy, so that the election remained still in the monks, only with the superintendence of the bishops.—But the bishops being become uneasy to the monasteries, by their aspiring to too much power, the abbots and monks, to deliver themselves from this subjection, betook themselves to the popes beseeching him to exempt them from the bishop's jurisdiction.

This was gladly embraced by the popes who saw their interest in creating, by this means, an immediate dependence on themselves in cities belonging to other governments, and in enlarging their authority over other bishops; besides that it imported extremely, that so great a body as that of the monks, who in those times were almost the only persons who addicted themselves to learning should depend entirely on the see of Rome, and this exemption quickly extended itself to all the monasteries, which, by this means, became more closely united to that see, and separated from the bishops. But St. Bernard, detesting this innovation, remonstrates to pope Eugenell. on the great abuse of an abbots refusing to obey his

|| || See Lowman's Paraphrase on the Revelations, p. 142.

bishop,

bishop, and the bishop his metropolitan; that the church militant ought to govern itself after the example of the church triumphant, where an angel never saith, I will not submit to an archangel. But what would this saint have said, if he had lived in one of the following ages? St. Bernard saith, Mezeray loudly condemns those exemptions, for, saith he, to exempt abbots from the jurisdiction of bishops, what is it other than commanding them to rebel? And is it not as monstrous a deformity in the body of the church, to unite immediately a chapter or an abbey to the holy see, as in a human body to join a finger to a head? But it is observable by the way, that the exemption from temporal rights, which the bishops themselves had granted them, opened the door to this spiritual exemption*.

The kissing the pope's toe was first submitted to by the emperor Justinian in 711. Laymen excluded as not eligible for bishops, priest or deacons, 768. The worship of images was first made a law to the church, by the second council of Nice, in the year 789, which council was afterwards opposed by that of Frankfort in 794 ||.

The dispute between the eastern and western bishops, whether the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only, was decided, both in Spain and France, in favour of the former opinion; and whether Jesus Christ may be stiled the adopted Son of God, was decided in the negative, and the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father asserted.

C E N T U R Y. THE N I N T H.

In the ninth century, the papal dignity received a remarkable increase, with respect to the church. The pope of Rome assumed the title of universal bishop, or head of the church; and strenuously laboured to im-

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 34.

|| Laval's History of the Reformation in France, Dedication.

prove this at first unmeaning title into something more substantial.

Though the eastern patriarchs were not wanting in a vigorous opposition, yet the bishops of Rome were very successful in subjecting most of the western churches to themselves. The means made use of for this purpose, and the principal causes of it, were the superstitious veneration for the pretended chair of St. Peter; — the divisions amongst the clergy, which produced the custom of appealing to the popes—the obligation laid on the missionaries employed for preaching the gospel among the pagans, to instruct them in the authority and dignity of the pope—their zeal likewise in asserting and vindicating his pre-eminence to those of all other ecclesiastics, which was confirmed by grant of privileges, and particularly by sending the pallium—the fantastical desire of some prelates to be consecrated by the pope himself — the separation from the eastern churches, which was always decried as heretical—the strict care taken to attach the body of the monks to the service of the see of Rome—the collections of the papal decretals, and of the canon laws of Rome, &c. were compiled for the direction of churches in general.

The extent of this authority cannot be precisely determined: it appears to be much larger in churches newly planted, than those of earlier date §.

Infallibility could not be admitted against the evidence of the fall of Honorius, and of the manifestly wicked lives of some popes; nor does it appear to have been a point fixed, since it was thought necessary, that the pope should not only transmit his confession of faith, but also at his elevation take the solemn oath of religion: besides, the decrees of councils were preferred to the sentences of the popes. Some churches in Africa and Aquilia asserted their freedom; some bishops did not allow the pope to be their judge; and the emperor and kings of Spain, France and England,

still exercised their supreme power in ecclesiastical matters; and it is a ridiculous pretence, that the pope at this time had a right of creating and deposing kings: for, on the other hand, the sovereigns of the city of Rome, who were first the Greek emperors, then Charlemagne looked on the popes as their subjects, and did summon them judicially to appear before them.

Nevertheless, in this century, the bishops of Rome became possessed of territories and subjects, which at first proceeded from the princes and kings of France of the Carlovingian line, who, in a great measure owing their promotion to the friendship of the pope, in the warmth of their gratitude, bestowed possessions in Italy on the see of Rome: but, then, they conveyed to the pope no more than an usufructuary enjoyment of certain territories, still retaining the sovereignty. In like manner the popes were invested with certain prerogatives, yet were subject to Charlemagne, as they had been before to the Greek emperors.

But the posterity of Charlemagne having been driven out of Italy in the year 884, pope Hadrian III. ordained, that the popes should, for the future, be consecrated without applying to the emperor at all †. The emperor being yet young, and Germany all in commotions, this juncture invited the pope to exclude him entirely from the election of the bishops and abbots, and to that end sent him a monitory, whereby the emperor was forbid to concern himself any more with those dispositions*.

However, we may, in the last place, mention that, about the close of this century, the kissing of the foot of the pope took place, as a token of respect, which had before been paid to the high priest among the pagans.

From this time, to about the middle of the next century, wherein Italy laboured under the extremest

† Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 88.

* Ibid. 106.

confusions, as well in the civil government as ecclesiastical, especially in the papacy, we must not expect to find any traces or forms of good government in the church, but a mere chaos of impieties, and a general preparative and forerunner of the miserable revolutions and disorders which followed.

Popes were then excommunicated by their successors, and their acts cancelled and annulled, not excepting the very administration of the sacraments. Six popes were driven out, and dethroned, by those who aspired to their places.

Romanus I. did the same to Stephen VI. which Stephen had done to Formosus; and Theodorus II. authorised all the acts of Formosus; and John X. who succeeded Theodorus, confirmed the acts of Formosus, and condemned the judgment of Stephen VI. Two popes were put to death, Leo V. by Christophorus, and afterwards Christophorus in the next century. In short, such a series of wild disorders gave occasion to historians to say, that those times produced monsters instead of popes. Fra. Paola makes a very judicious reflection on the disorders in those times: "I have not found (saith he) reasons sufficient to prove the history of pope Joan; no more than I have met with any to convince me of the contrary; however, to speak sincerely, I incline to the opinion of its being false; but not for its absurdity, that age producing things as extraordinary as a lady's being papeſs†."

The Greek church which had held many disputes with the western bishops, especially since the sixth century entirely separated from the see of Rome, with respect to some doctrines and ceremonies which will hereafter be specified.

The custom of observing Lent was first introduced into England by Ercumbert, the seventh king of Kent: at the beginning of this century several monasteries of nuns were established, the Roman ritual introduced into most

† Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 62.

churches, the number of solemn and particular festivals was increased, fasting in the vigils commanded, and the feast of the presentation of the Virgin in the temple was observed by the Latins.

The consecrating of churches and altars was most regularly observed, and the custom of burying in churches introduced.

CENTURY THE TENTH.

In the tenth century the election of the pope still remained in the clergy, the senate, and the people, the soldiery not excepted; but the freedom of their election was corrupted by bribery and violence. Theodora, a famous courtesan, got her professed lover chosen pope, who was called John X. A. D. 915; and John XI. was chosen pope at the age of twenty.

Nor is there any century in which the Roman chair was disgraced by so many profligate popes as in this. The power of the popes being enlarged, and confirmed, they were considered as bishops of the world; and their jurisdiction was admitted in all matters, at least which are styled ecclesiastical. Princes now began to seek their friendship, and found their account in it too; and then it was no wonder if the authority of St. Peter's successors should be readily acknowledged, and their vanity soothed and flattered. Hence we find, that about this period the popes began to change their Christian names for others, and the bishop of Rome claimed the appellation of Pope in contradistinction from other bishops †; and even asserted, that the bishops of Rome, as successors of St. Peter, and vicegerents of Christ, have all power, both in heaven and earth. In order to establish this, a power was asserted of making articles of faith; and great zeal was used to subject all ecclesiastical persons immediately to the see of Rome.

In A. D. 963, Otho of Saxony entered Italy, and subdued it by arms; and in order to settle some form of

† It is observed by Muratori, in the History of Italy, that the appellation of pope was not in those days peculiar to the bishops of Rome, but also borne by other considerable bishops.

government there, he assembled a little council of bishops, wherein he deposed pope John XII. but he had been made pope at the age of eighteen, and had dishonoured the pontificate by adulteries and perjuries, and and the rest of his character was unsuitable to his office].

Otho obliged the Roman people, and pope Leo VIII. who had been put in the place of pope John, to give up to the emperors the right of electing popes for thirty-six years, and within that space, out of twelve two were elected peaceably, but the others not without tumult and disorder, which occasioned Benedict V. to be carried prisoner by Otho I. Benedict VI. by Otho II. John XIII. was strangled by one who aspired to the dignity ; Boniface VII. robbed the treasury of St. Peter, and fled ; Joannes XVII. or rather XVI. went into voluntary banishment ; so that Baronius observes, though these are placed in the catalogue to make up the number, the church had then in effect no other head than Jesus Christ himself, and we may justly enquire after the infallibility.

In the midst of the confusions, the archbishop of Rheims took upon him the care of the French church.—In Germany, the emperor being no less pious than brave, and several of their bishops religiously disposed, they applied themselves to the prevention of disorders, and to promoting a reformation ; insomuch, that the German churches are said to flourish at this time*.—In England, as king Alfred had restored the study of literature in the latter end of the last century, the kings, his successors, took some care about the reformation and ecclesiastical discipline : but we find the laws were enacted, and several regulations made, evidently shew their undue attachments to the see of Rome ; such particularly as related to the payment of tythes, Peter-pence, and some others.

|| Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 80.
 Dupin's History of the Church, vol. iii. p. 80.

There was but little controversy about points of doctrine in this century, but in relation to the consecrated elements.—The translation of bishops was now frequent—Marriage was forbid to be celebrated on any Sunday, or in Lent—Bells were first consecrated—and the solemn canonization of a saint by the pope was introduced.

The general commemoration of all deceased saints was instituted at the end of this century.

And till towards the end of this century, the holy scriptures were read, and divine service celebrated, in the vulgar tongue †.

Octavianus was the first who changed his Name for the sake of obtaining the dignity of bishop of Rome, A. D. 956.

CENTURY THE ELEVENTH.

In the Eleventh Century we find the bishops of Rome were by no means content with confining their jurisdiction to matters which may be styled ecclesiastical; they were not satisfied with depriving princes of the right of investiture, and arrogating to themselves the confirmation of the newly-elected bishops, as indispensibly requisite; but they assumed the disposal of the most profitable benefices, as the surest means of providing for their sustentures; and pope Alexander, in 1062, sold several bishopricks, which gave occasion to many bitter complaints both in Germany and England*.

The appellation of pope, which originally signifies *papa*, was first appropriated to the bishop of Rome by Gregory VII. A. D. 1050.

The cardinals had the red hat now given them as a sign of their dignity, and the election of the popes was limited to the cardinals, besides other singular privileges which they now enjoy.

Pope Gregory VII. forced the bishops to take an oath

† Preface to Laval's History of the Reformation in France.

* Walch's History translated, p. 182. See the *Histoire du Droit Public. Eccles. Franc. and Mosheim. Instit. Histoire. Eccles.* p. 506.

of fealty to the popes, and by a decree enacted, that none should dare to condemn any one who had appealed to the pope.—Having first openly avowed, that as pope, he had an inherent and absolute power over all sovereigns, he took upon him to cite the emperor Henry to appear and answer for his conduct at Rome. Henry despised those citations, for which he was excommunicated by Gregory, who threatened the same to Philip I. of France, and issued his fulminations against most of the princes of Europe. He governed all the Western churches with an absolute authority, and did all that was in his power to get himself made the sovereign monarch of the universe.—The *dictatus papæ*, which contains twenty-seven propositions in behalf of the highest pretensions of the court of Rome, was wrote by this pope. The papists confess they are ashamed of those propositions; and particularly the twenty-third, which declares, that the Roman pontiff being canonically ordained, becomes undoubtedly holy by the merits of St. Peter*.

Pope Gregory VII. besides his repeated excommunications, and the frequent rebellions which he stirred up and fomented, prevailed even with the emperor's eldest son to join in rebellion against his father, who, by this means, was almost driven out of Italy; and the succeeding pope, Victor III. pursued the same methods in carrying on the war, poured out his excommunications afresh upon the Emperor, plied him with frequent rebellions, urged his son Henry against him, and at length induced him to take arms; so that at last, after great vicissitudes of fortune, he came to an accommodation, but was deceived in the conditions, and in the end reduced to a private life, by a resignation of his empire to his son, whom he caused to be crowned king.

This unnatural son, when his father came to the diet, held at Mentz, with a numerous army, not long after, went to meet him, and casting himself at his feet,

* Gregory's Life by Anonymous.

begged pardon with all the outward marks of a sincere repentance: the emperor was wrought upon by this feigned submission, and they both went together to Bingen, where the son deluded the father, raising a jealousy in him, that the archbishop of Mentz might keep him prisoner, if he entered that city before he was absolved from his excommunication: therefore, advising him to stay at Bingen, while he went to dispose the princes of the adverse party, at that diet, to a reconciliation, the emperor swallowed the bait. The son went to the diet without him, and by the instigation of the pope, got himself proclaimed emperor.

Pascal II. the fourth pope from Gregory VII. took up the spiritual arms of excommunication, to wrest the investiture of bishops and abbots out of the hands of the emperors, held a council at Guastalla in Mantua, and another at Troyes in France, and renewed the decrees of Gregory VII. that no laick should intermeddle with the collation of benefices. Violent quarrels, contests, and wars, ensued, which extended to the next century*. But the emperor came to Italy with a powerful army, and obtained a revocation of that decree.

Some fathers of the council made use of this dilemma. "If the decree, by which the pope consented to yield up the investitures to the emperor, was lawful, it ought to be observed: but if it be unjust, and, as some say, heretical, the pope, as the author of it, is therefore unjust and heretical also †."

Indulgences, as they are now understood, and the office of the Virgin Mary, as it is now used, by the church of Rome, had the sanction of a decree by the

* Father Paul, p. 92.

† Here our author adds, by way of comment, that a concession of a thing, just and due in itself, is valid, though made through fear; and on the other side, an act is never justifiable, if against the law of God, by the strongest impressions of fear that can be pleaded: because the natural divine law is, of itself, good and immutable, and commands things in their nature important; and that therefore the commands of God bind absolutely, and not the commands of the church.

council of Clermont, A. D. 1095 †. About the end of this century the practice of disciplining one's self was introduced; — the custom of doing penance for other sins took place; — the feasts of the four seasons were observed; — several councils enjoined abstinence on Fridays and Saturdays; mass for the living was to be celebrated but once a day, a second permitted for the dead; the priests were enjoined penance, who, through negligence, should let fall the hostia; — all the faithful were obliged to communicate at Easter; — the communion was hitherto received under both kinds ||; — a decree was made in England against the marriage of priests, by Lanfranc, bishop of Canterbury, in a synod held at Winchester ||.

CENTURY THE TWELFTH.

In this century the pope of Rome and other ecclesiastics attempted with great vigour to subject to themselves princes, and their kingdoms and states, urging, that the splendor of their dignity was to that of the majesty of emperors and kings as the effulgence of the sun to the borrowed light of the moon; and therefore they demanded from crowned heads the most extravagant marks of respect:—they then claimed the right of conferring royal dignity, and particularly presumed to consider the imperial crown as absolutely at their disposal, and by the pretenders they set up, disposed of entire kingdoms, provinces, and countries: they excommunicated emperors, kings, and princes, on the slightest occasions; laid their dominions under an interdict; discharged their subjects from their fidelity, and even dissolved the sacred bonds of marriage*.

† Laval's History of the Reformation in France.

|| Dupin's Church History, vol. iii. p. 121.

|| Laval's Dedication to the History of the Reformation in France.

* Walch's History of the Popes.

And Dupin †, much to the same purpose, tells us, that the church of Rome was disturbed by obstinate schisms; the popes at war with the emperors; the kings and bishops disputing about their temporal rights; the immunities of the church, and of ecclesiastical persons, strenuously opposed, and in consequence, were as bravely supported by the bishops, and maintained by the decrees of councils; the church over-stocked with monastic and other orders of monks; scholastic divinity the common study of the clergy; and the dignity of the sacraments, and the external worship, were greatly affected by many prevailing heresies. The struggles and contentions betwixt the pope and the emperor were confined to Italy and Germany alone, which were the kingdoms and dominions of the emperor; but several bishops in France took occasion to oppose the pope; but, as they were not enough united to enter all into the same league with the pope, the king generally carried his point §.

In England, where the king had hitherto conferred bishopricks and abbies, Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1102, in obedience to the pope's commands, began to refuse to consecrate bishops nominated by the king. This contest held for many years, the king, viz. Henry I. maintaining his right, and the archbishop, supported by the pope, opposing it: the king, in hopes to bring the pope to hear reason, sent an ambassador to Rome, who, provoked by the rough answers and menaces of the pope, declared, that his master would never yield up his authority, though he lost his kingdom in its defence; to which the pope, with no less boldness, replied, he would never suffer the king to nominate to the benefices if he lost his head. The king, on the ambassador's return, exerted his authority; and Anselm, the archbishop, was obliged to leave the kingdom; nor could he return without

Dupin, Century XII.

Dupin's Preface to the twelfth Century, folio edit.

complying with the king's pleasure. — But this prince dying, and a civil war ensuing, it was easy for the clergy to introduce into England what the pope had done in his empire.

In that space of time, between the years 1122, wherein Henry renounced the investiture by the pope, and 1145, it became a rule almost every where in Germany, that, upon the death of a bishop, his successor should be chosen by the chapter, and confirmed by the metropolitan; that the abbots should be chosen by the monks, and then confirmed by the bishop, if the monastery were not exempted and if it were, then the pope was to be applied to for his confirmation; that the other benefices, which were *de jure patronatus*, should be conferred by the bishops upon the presentation of the patron; and that all the rest should be at the entire disposal of the bishop. — Nevertheless, the election of the pope came under no new regulation*.

However, the emperor held a right with respect to some churches; and the pope, unwilling to revive the old quarrel, as it were, shared snacks with him under various pretences.

France, however, retained the royal prerogative (called the Regale) of conferring all simple benefices vacant upon the bishops death, until a successor was appointed. — But near the close of the next century we find Boniface VIII. had a sharp contest with Philip of France, and ruined the kingdom, in great measure, by the excommunications, interdicts, &c. and, at length, deprived the king of his throne, and for some time gave it to the emperor Albert, depriving those of their benefices, who held them under the king†. This proved one considerable means of enlarging the power of the pope.

Another considerable means of increasing the papal power was the business of tythes, first fruits, &c. which

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 106.

† Abstract from Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, *ibid.*

was made to extend to fisheries, hay, wool, bees, &c. which were exacted under the severest censures. — And in order the better to promote their wealth and power, they revoked a law that had been made, that the church should reject the donations and legacies of public sinners; but this obstacle was removed, and the pope and clergy endeavoured to prove those donations a kind of extenuations where they could not be pronounced meritorious.

The large opportunities which the court of Rome had in their hands, of obliging by the disposal of so many benefices, drew thither a concourse of the clergy of all sorts; of those who had no benefices, to obtain them; and those who had, to get them exchanged for better: and this occasioned frequent absence, they were obliged to purchase indulgence or absence of leave from their cures. — Commendams was also another pretty device: when an elective benefice became vacant such as a bishopric abby, — the care of it was recommended by the superior to some person of merit, or of interest, till another was chose: afterwards it was given for a certain time †.

But among other measures that contributed to render the pope supreme governor of all Christendom, and to center the riches of the world in the treasury of the church, were the crusades or martial expeditions against infidels, especially as the clergy were fond of preaching against heretics, as they called them and their protectors. “This device,” says Mezeray, “was a very successful means to aggrandize the pope; for they ordered princes to enroll themselves in those expeditions; they retained the sovereign command of those armies by their legates; and they became, in some sort, lords in chief of all who went to the crusade, not only because the pope exacted obedience from them, but because they took the other under their protection till their return, which

† This is farther considered in the State of Religion in England, introductory to the Necessity of a Reformation.

was like letters of state, and suspended all civil and criminal proceedings §."

But the greatest support of all this usurpation was the establishment of the inquisition in Italy, and the confirmation of Gratian's collection of canon laws. — Add to this the practice of canonization as an excellent means to secure constancy in the faith of the Romish church; to enrich the papal treasury; and to extend that power not only to the disposal of temporal crowns and kingdoms, but even of celestial crowns too, when it was subservient to their ambition or interest.

Pope Celestine III. was a remarkable instance of this boundless ambition, who having been formerly obliged by Henry with several favours, was more inclinable to crown him, in order to which the young emperor hastened to Rome with his empress, and they were both crowned by this holy father in an unprecedented and most remarkable manner. The ceremony is thus related *: after the emperor had taken his oath to defend the church, and the patrimony of St. Peter, &c. the emperor and empress were brought into the church and placed by the pope; and mass being solemnly celebrated by him, he anointed first the emperor, using certain solemn words, and afterwards the empress; then sitting down in his pontifical chair, he held the imperial crown between his feet, and the emperor kneeling and bowing down his head, and likewise the empress did respectively receive the crown from his feet, which was no sooner on each of their heads, but the pope, with his foot, spurned it off to the ground, in token that he had power to depose them at his pleasure: after which, the cardinals standing round received the said crown, and reverently put it upon the head, first of the emperor and then of the empress, and then concluded the coronation with pomp and magnificence un-

§ Mezeray's *Life of Philip Augustus*.

* *History of Popery*, vol. i. p. iii. p. 417, who cites Hoveden, Vignier, Baronius, Ranulphus in *Polychronico*, lib. vii. c. xxvi.

heard of till that time. Indeed the court of Rome was amazingly splendid by the great number of officers belonging to it, and the many rites and ceremonies that were observed in all their public acts of religion.

The ninth general council was held at Lateran, A. D. 1123, wherein they granted remission of sins to such who went a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or in aid to the catholic Christians against infidels, and excommunicated such as, having been crossed by the pope or that purpose, relinquished their pilgrimage †. And the tenth general council, 1139, was only, or principally, to declare the decrees of pope Peter of Leon null and void.

In this century several institutions took place: two military orders of monks were appointed, viz. those of St. John of Jerusalem, who were to take care of the pilgrims who went to that city: — the other were the templars, whose office it was to provide for the safety of pilgrims, by fighting in their defence against such as opposed or molested them *. — The Benedictine order of monks, which had been introduced in the East, prevailed in the West, and were, by permission of the pope, become almost independent of their bishops. — The bishops had in almost all churches their officials to perform divine service for them: — academies were generally established throughout Italy and France to qualify for the office of the priesthood: — the canonization of saints was appropriated to the pope by Alexander III. 1160, and the remission of certain sins reserved to the pope; others were pardonable by the bishops in general: communion in both kinds was yet retained: — baptism was chiefly administered on solemn days: but what is more remarkable, the holy inquisition, as it is impiously called, with all the train of the most arbitrary and tyrannical persecutions and torture, generally fol-

† Dupin, Century XII.

* Dupin.

lowed by the most inhuman and cruel deaths, was erected, A. D. 1198 *, but according to others, it did not commence, or be put in full force till the year 1204, against the Albigenes.

CENTURY THE THIRTEENTH.

In the Thirteenth Century we see the power of the popish prelates at its greatest height; but withal so strained, that it was natural for the cords to break. That summit of power seems to terminate with pope Boniface the VIIIth, towards the close of this century, who arrogated to himself the power of deposing princes by divine right—published a bull, by which he forbid all princes to exact any thing out of the ecclesiastical revenues.—He likewise instituted a jubilee, whereby he granted plenary indulgences to all who should visit the church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome, and ordained the same should be observed every century. The opening of this jubilee brought vast numbers to Rome, and pope Boniface, to shew his sovereign authority in temporals as well as spirituals, appeared at the public solemnities, sometimes in his pontificals, and at others in an imperial dress, with this motto, *Ecce duo Gladii*. Indeed, in respect to the pope of Rome's supremacy over the whole church, the ancient maxims were still retained, and instances are not wanting of their putting them in practice when they had opportunity *.

Father Paul gives us a compendium of these matters: he says, “By various methods the popes drew to themselves a great part of the collation of benefices in all the Christian kingdoms in the west; but, in the eastern churches, they were not allowed to dispose of one benefice. In Italy, indeed, they met with such great success, that they flattered themselves they should impose on all Europe.

In England, where the benefices are very rich, the Roman courtiers made such mighty acquisitions, that,

† Blair.

* Walch's History.

in the year 1232, the clergy and military men of the kingdom formed a confederacy or association, and pillaged all the goods and revenues of the beneficed Roman clergy throughout the island. The pope commanded the king, under pain of excommunication, to chastise them with his temporal arms, and the bishops to excommunicate them; but the confederacy was too strong, either for the king to punish, or the bishops to excommunicate them.

Pope Innocent IV. somewhat incensed at it, sent one Martin, a kinsman of his, to renew the pretensions of the court of Rome. The English complained to the king, that the Italians had got possession of all the benefices, and the king drove Martin out of the kingdom; and, making a computation of the revenues, which the pope drew out of the kingdom, found that they were equal to his own revenues, which amounted to 60,000 marks: and, upon his laying these grievances before the pope, in the council of Lyons, where he presided, he was answered, that the council was not assembled for that affair, nor was that the season to remedy it. He had called it, he pretended, to give succours to the Holy Land; but his true motive was, to excommunicate the emperor Frederic*.

Nevertheless, the court ceased not to make new attempts in the year 1253, requiring the bishop of Lincoln to confer a benefice upon a Genoese; which he rejected, at it was against the canons of the church: but he was nevertheless excommunicated by the pope. However, this good man died before the sentence could be executed, and the pope was so malevolent, that he ordered a process against him, to take him out of his grave, and sent it to the king to execute.

In the year 1258, Alexander IV. his successor, on the like occasion, excommunicated the archbishop of York †, who withstood the prosecution with great

* Matt. Paris, anno 1245. § i.

† Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 147.

fortitude;

fortitude; and, drawing near his end, wrote a very pious letter to the pope, exhorting him to suppress these innovations so injurious to the church, and so dangerous to the safety of his own soul.

As for cardinals, nothing can be surprising that is said of them, when one considers the stile of the court of Rome, *regibus equi parantur* ||: whence they conclude, saith he, that no revenue is too great for them, that is not super-abounding for kings themselves; and it is for this reason, that popes have granted them the privilege of being capable of holding all sorts of benefices, either secular or regular. But is there any thing in this that exceeds the ordinary terms of speaking on this subject, seeing it is the tenet of every canonist, that the pope can grant dispensations for holding as many benefices as he pleases? and this was sometimes done contrary to the letter of the law, and therefore, in some parts of Europe, treated with marks of detestation.

But, at length, this supremacy became greatly curtailed by some of those advocates and champions for truth, who, notwithstanding any or all the discouragements, dared to assert the scriptures as the only rule of faith*.

The popes themselves gave many flagrant instances of their fallibility, even in doctrine, crowned heads opposed their insolence, and publicly declared them heretics, and that too with the approbation of many eminent divines. But the great blow to this supremacy was the maxim first reduced to practice, by the councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basil, and by the two last established as an article of faith. That the pope is subject to a general council, and bound to obey their decrees; and that, in case of necessity, he is even obliged to apply to them for their judgment and protection. Which doctrine proved the more fatal at Rome, as it has been received by the Gallican church, who

|| Vide Nicol. de Clemangis corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu, c. xi.

* See Rol's History of the Reformers.

have ever since strictly adhered to the two following maxims, always looked upon in France as indisputable.

The first is, that the pope has no authority or right to command or order any thing, either in general or particular, in which the temporalities or civil rights of the kingdom are concerned.

The second is, that, notwithstanding the pope's supremacy is owned in matters purely spiritual, this is to be understood as under the regulation, and subordinate to, the decrees of councils, canons, &c. and the ancient and present privileges of that nation†. This was further ratified in the fifteenth century.

But we nevertheless find, that they retained a veneration for the holy catholic father, and adhered to as many of his favourite tenets and customs, as consisted with their civil establishment.

CENTURY THE FOURTEENTH.

This century affords many dreadful examples of the popes and bishops exciting and inflaming catholic princes against the Albigenses, and all others, whom they stigmatised with the name of heretics, either by public crusades, or private tribunals before inquisitors, to destroy them. Accordingly several religious orders were instituted in this century, viz. of the preaching brothers, whose office and business was to be zealous declaimers against the Albigenses. They had a monastery at Paris, in St. James's house, thence called Jacobins—another order of minims—of Augustine hermits—Carmelites—the order of Maria de la Merci—of servites and celestins: these grew so numerous, that Gregory X. at the general council, forbid establishing any new ones§. Bowing at the name of Jesus was introduced into the church, by the decree of the

† The particulars of those privileges, &c. included in twenty articles, may be seen in Broughton's Dictionary.

§ Dupin's History of the Church, vol. IV. p. 319.

second council of Lyons, 1212; kneeling at the communion, by pope Honorius, 1214 †. That called the feast of the holy sacrament was likewise instituted in the church of Rome, but not universally received till the next century. Auricular confession was made necessary to salvation by the council of Lateran, the twelfth general council, 1215; and transubstantiation, after a dispute of four hundred years, concerning the nature of the sacrament of our Lord's supper, pope Innocent III. determined the matter, and procured a decree for making it an article of the catholic faith in the Lateran council, 1215*.

The thirteenth general council was held at Lyons, 1245, as well for civil as ecclesiastical affairs. Three points were aimed at by the pope, viz. to relieve the empire of Constantinople against the Greeks, the empire of Germany against the Tartars, and the Holy Land against the Saracens: for these purposes, they decreed the twentieth part of the revenues of all ecclesiastical benefices, and the tenth of the revenues of the pope; but exempted the crossado priest from any contributions in this council. The pope excommunicated the emperor Frederic, and dispossessed him of his empire, on suspicion of his having been dilatory in supply of the papal chair, and, to shew his own great authority now, he possessed it ‖.

The fourteenth general council was held at Lyons, A. D. 1274, for the relief of the Holy Land, for the reunion of the Greek church, and for the reforming the church discipline. In the fourth session, the union of the Greek church was attempted, but on such points of faith as were of an indeterminate nature, particularly relating to the Trinity, and the union proposed could not be effected.

The fourteenth century further evinces, that the popes could not longer enjoy that vast degree of gran-

Decretal, lib. iii. chap. 10.

Laval's Preface to the History of the Réformation in France.

‖ Henault's History of France.

leur to which they had aspired, nor support their intolerable usurpation in quiet: their authority was often called in question, till they were obliged to desist in part from their pretensions. Philip, king of France, gave several great blows to the papal authority; and from the ensuing schisms of double elections, when the opposite factions chose different popes at the same time, an occasion was taken to bridle the popes authority, by calling councils, which often proceeded so far as to depose the holy fathers. To this may be added, that the translation of the papal chair, by Clement V. from Rome to Avignon, where the popes constantly resided for seventy years together, carried along with it several inconveniencies, which proved greatly prejudicial to the ecclesiastical monarchy. Among others, the popes authority being founded upon this belief, that St. Peter had been at Rome, and by his presence had communicated a particular prerogative and holiness to that chair, it was very much questioned whether the same could be transferred to Avignon*.

Boniface IX. was the first who exacted annates, i. e. one year's revenue of every bishopric and abby, at each installment†; had published a bull, and declared himself to be sovereign lord, both in temporals and spirituals. King Philip of France burnt this bull, and sent the following answer to the pope: "Philip, by the grace of God, king of the Franks, to Boniface, who sets up for sovereign pontiff, little or no health. Be it known to your great extravagance, that we are not subject to any person whatsoever as to what regards temporals; that the collation of churches and prebendships belongs to us by a royal right, and that we have a power to appropriate the fruits of it to ourselves."

After the popes had assumed great part of the power to themselves, of which they had stripped the emperor, John XXII. in the year 1316, made a decree,

* Puffendorff's Introduction to the History of Europe.

† Dupin's Hist. ch. v. 4. p. 265.

that for three years, whoever obtained a benefice of more than twenty-four ducats of yearly rent, should pay one year's value, for the expedition of his bull.

Some few years after the institution, or reservation of annates, king Edward, in the year 1373, sent an ambassador to pope Gregory XI. then at Avignon, to press him to annul the reservations entirely, which, after it had been in agitation, were the next year totally abolished by this pope.

But a great schism arising in the church upon his death, which happened in the year 1378, and produced two popes, and consequently two courts, the necessary expences to support them were also doubled. Thus all inventions for fleecing the people were set on work with fresh vigour. Simony appeared no where so barefaced, the two courts holding an open market for benefices; and every essay was made that was possible to strip the ordinary collators of the right of presenting.

Hitherto the court of Rome had not taken off the mask, nor had so avowedly owned that passion she had for money; but pope Urban VI. left it no longer to conjecture, why he concerned himself with the collation of benefices, when he declared, that no presentation should be good, where the value was not expressed*.

By these methods the apostolic chamber came to a juster knowledge of the value of the annates. This was thought by some to be no better than putting up the benefices to auction: but on the other hand, it was insinuated, that it was only to prevent the holy chamber being defrauded of their right.

No body can deny, but that the disorders were notorious in the Roman courts on this occasion; and that many neighbouring kingdoms were so greatly alarmed and disgusted at the variety of tricks and shifts they saw practised, that they came at last to acknowledge neither of the competitors for pope. Germany refused

to submit to the reservations. Innocent VII. sent his legate into Germany, to grant new bulls for certain sums to such as had come in by episcopal collation, and to compound for the first fruits. But the emperor Charles IV. forbade the levying them, saying it was necessary to reform the manners of the clergy, but not their purses.

These confusions received a considerable increase by the addition of a third pope, which, with the king of France's measures, will be related in the history of the next century.

Moreover, the Greek church, says Dupin, was disturbed by frivolous questions; the order of franciscan monks torn in pieces by odd opinions, and extravagant practices; diverse errors taught by divines, condemned by the bishops, or universities; and several disorders suppressed by the institutions of councils and bishops. The divines which flourished in this age, followed the methods of the schools, as their predecessors had done. The commentators upon holy scripture produced nothing great nor excellent; and the historians, nothing exact or perfect. But the study of the civil law, and the languages, acquired a great degree of perfection; and the love of certain profitable sciences must be acknowledged to have prevailed in this century†. But it is likewise notorious, that the catholics have castrated many valuable books, and suppressed every thing that might serve for the defence of the temporal authority; and made such alterations and additions to several books reprinted, as might best serve to promote the doctrines and practices of the church of Rome: an evident proof of their degeneracy and corruption‡.

This century is also remarkable for the opposition made in England to the grosser errors of popery, by Wickliffe, and his adherents, of which we shall have occasion to treat in another part of this work.

§ Father Paul, p. 184.

† Preface to Century XIV. Fol. Edit.

‡ See Father Paul of Benefices, p. 179.

The fifteenth general council was held at Vienna, 1311, for condemning the templars, and the extinction of their order.

With respect to offices and ceremonies, the plurality of benefices was commonly practised; the commendams of abbeys became very frequent; excommunications, and other ecclesiastical censures, were made use of to enforce the payment of tithes or tenth from the people, and to maintain the clergy in their immunities*, and the office of churchwardens first appointed.

Notwithstanding the prohibition of the Lateran council, some new religious orders were established, as the order of Jesuits, afterwards confirmed by Urban V. 1367; the order of St. Saviour; the order of St. Ambrose.

CENTURY THE FIFTEENTH.

The Fifteenth Century of the church is full of great transactions: the schism of the popes, which appeared at the beginning of it, was, for many years, the great care and business of the prelates and Christian princes of the west; besides this, the difference between the council of Basil and pope Eugenius IV. and the project of the re-union of the Greeks to the Latin church, were the great concerns of Christendom: but the former had not those mischievous consequences which were feared, nor the latter the success which was hoped for. Among many other remarkable events, the opposition made in several parts of Germany to the errors and enormities of the church of Rome had this tendency, to put men upon the study of useful learning, upon searching the scripture and tradition; and it obliged the prelates to labour after a reformation of the clergy, so generally and so justly complained of; as also to make many regulations in the discipline of the church, in which the church of France more particularly distin-

* Dupin's Hist. Ch. iv. p. 265.

guished itself, and furnishes us with the best part of the history of this century.

This schism is generally considered with regard to the measures they had taken, and the effects of them; the business of collation, of benefices, the reservation of annates, &c. had very much incensed some of the neighbouring princes, who were jealous of their subjects property. One of the first steps taken by the king of France was, his letters of subtraction, as they were called, which is a declaration of withdrawing from his obedience, published in the year 1408, which had a very good effect. But in the year 1409, a third pope was elected, to whom, though France paid obedience, yet she stood firm in maintaining the king's edict by which all reservations, annates, and other exactions of the court of Rome, were forbid, until they were settled by a lawful general council; and it happened at that time, that the parliament of Paris were in part composed of counsellors that were well established in the ecclesiastical laws; and those made a noble stand against the encroachments attempted to be made by the pope's ecclesiastical judges.

In the sixteenth general council, held at Constance, the schism of the popes was extinguished, by one of the popes having renounced, after he had fled from the council and been brought back again and deposed, viz. John XXIII. And the two others having been deposed, viz. Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII. in the year 1417. Martin V. was elected pope at the general council.

Great hopes were entertained, that the council and the pope together, the two most powerful concurrents upon earth, would set themselves to reform the many abuses that had crept into the church; and, indeed, the council recommended it to the pope: but from their desire of returning home, and some difficulties which they found attended it, it was put off for a more convenient season,

[Abf. from the Preface of Monf. Dupin, to Century XV.

under the direction of a future council; so that council terminated April 12, 1418*.

But they first condemned the errors of John Hufs and Wickliffe, and in which John Hufs was condemned to be burnt.

The French not being willing to stay so long, a decree was made in the parliament of Paris, that no obedience should be paid to the pope, unless he first admitted, and acknowledged the king's edict†, which suppressed the reservations and exactions of money in France.

The pope, being apprized of this by his nuncios, agrees to it for that time; but having gained some members of the university to his party, in the year 1422, he again attempted to make the reservations: however, he failed in the attempt, and they proceeded to the imprisonment of all his adherents, the rector of the university, and divers others of the members and fellows; and upon the pope's putting the city of Lyons under interdiction, because that city obeyed the king's edict, the parliament strictly forbade their obedience to it.

This dispute lasted till the year 1424, when matters were compromised betwixt them; they had, as it were, divided the power, and the advantages: but it did not prove to the satisfaction of either parties, so it lasted but a little while. However, at the end of about seven years, Martin died, to whom succeeded Eugene IV. during whose popedom, in 1431, the council of Basil took in hand the reformation so necessary. All reservations were prohibited, except of those benefices which were vacant in curia, the annates, and many other exactions peculiar to that court.

The pope finding such a check given to his power, after many attempts to obtain an alteration, came to an open rupture with them. The pope dissolved the council—the council deprived the pope, and chose an-

* Father Paul of Benefices and Revenue, p. 196.

† Conference of Ordinances, lib. I. tit. liii. p. 283.

other.—This bred another schism in the church.—France and Germany received the decrees of this council; and in the year 1438, the famous Pragmatic Sanction, which Mezeray calls the bulwark of the Gallican church, was published in France, which restored the elections to the chapters, the collations to the ordinaries, and abolished the reservations.

In this century, viz. at the council of Bourges, 1438, their decrees were principally taken out of those of the council of Basil: for when pope Eugenius used his utmost endeavours to dissolve the council of Basil, and to destroy its authority, the fathers of the council sent their deputies into France to present the decrees and constitutions which they had made for the reformation of, ecclesiastical, discipline to Charles VII. and the church of France. The king, not willing to do any thing in a matter of that importance, immediately convened a council of bishops to examine those decrees. The result was, giving a blow to the suprémacie, by that maxim, first reduced to practice by the councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basil, and by the two last established, as an article of faith, “That the pope is subject to a general council;” which doctrine proved the more fatal at Rome, as it has been received by the Gallican church as a mark of distinction.

But all the regulations made by them against those innovations in their dominion, served but to sharpen the industry of the court of Rome, to find out other expedients which might prove effectual for these ends, under other pretexts, as well as to supply, by a multiplication of new rights, their defect of power in matters wherein the interposition of princes had restrained them.

It was about this time resignations took place, it being never before allowed to churchmen to quit the cure that had been assigned them; and till now it was thought incumbent on the minister, who had undertaken a charge, and received a recompence for it, that he should continue to perform it to the end of his life: but however, this being permitted and encouraged, it turned to the advantage of the court of Rome, as it made

the more frequent, and enlarged the sum arising from annates.

When the resources of this kind began to dry up, indulgences and remission of sins were thought of in their room, to be bestowed on such persons who should contribute money for the holy war, or any other pious uses: and this matter was carried so high, that every one knows, that the changes, that were made in consequence of those indulgences, in Germany and many other parts of Europe, and which commenced pretty early in the next century, make no small part of ecclesiastical history.

In Italy, where the council of Basil never was received, and the adherence to the pope was more strong, the reservations had taken deeper root, every pope renewing them with ease, and introducing new pretensions and impositions, and shewing no instance of mitigation in the rigour of any of them, except where some expedient had been found to work the same effect an easier way.

In Germany, where the council of Basil was by some admitted, by others not, there was great diversity in the decisions concerning beneficiary causes. To provide against and reconcile these differences, Nich. V. and the emperor Frederic III. in the year 1448, made a concordat, concluded in the pope's name, to the following tenor: — That the benefices vacant in court should be reserved to the pope, and that the rest of the elective benefices should go by election*.

In France there were warm disputes subsisting for a considerable time, sometimes the pope seeming to get the better in the controversy, and sometimes the king of France.

At length Leo X. framed a concordat with king Francis I. of France, that the pragmatic sanction should be abolished, and the election of bishops and abbots should be taken from the cathedral and colle-

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 206.

giate churches, and given to the king, who was to name a fit person, and the pope to confer the benefice; it was farther concluded, that the pope could not give expectatives, nor make any reservations, general or special: though there was great difficulty in getting this concordat to be received, the university appealing to a general council lawfully convened, yet the king's authority and interest prevailed, and it was put in execution throughout.

Thus, after several popes, had between 1076 and 1150, thundered out so many excommunications, and occasioned much rebellion and bloodshed, in order to wrest from princes the collation of bishoprics, and to give the election to the chapters: on the contrary, the quarrel seems now inverted, and Pius II. and five of his successors have, with the same zeal and constancy, been struggling to take the election from the chapter, and give it to the king, which Leo the Tenth at last accomplished: so true it is, that a change in interests draws along with it both a change, and even a contradiction, in doctrines.

In a council held at Rouen, 1445, we have forty constitutions chiefly relating to the discipline of that church: there is one of them against the superstition of those who gave particular names to the images of the Virgin, such as our lady of recovery, our lady of pity, consolation and grace: — they forbid the carrying about the relics of saints in order to get money: clandestine marriages were likewise prohibited: others related to the morals and habits of ecclesiastics, the celebration of holy days, the payment of tenths, ornaments of churches, &c. These regulations are taken from the councils of Basil, Lateran, the pragmatic sanction, decretals, and other provincial councils*.

The feasts of the Virgin's conception and of our Lord's transfiguration were instituted by Calixtus III. 1456 †: — the taking away the chalice was done by

* Dupin's *History of the Church*, vol. iii. p. 300.

† Dupin.

the council of Constance, A. D. 1420 §: — the sacraments fixed to the number of seven in the council of Florence, 1439 ||, — and the order of templars abolished || ||.

CENTURY THE SIXTEENTH.

M. Dupin in (the preface to) his history of the sixteenth century observes, that the ecclesiastical history of this age deserves the particular attention of all who have any concern for religion, there being no century in which there have been greater revolutions in the church. — The pope of Rome saw, with grief, a great part of Europe forsake their allegiance to his holiness; several provinces of Germany, England, and Scotland, and several kingdoms of the North, were departed from his authority; and France, which till then had been free from such monsters, as he calls them *, produced some who were not less hurtful to the state than to the church: — “But, says he,” “if the church catholic lost a good deal of its extent this way, it endeavoured to recompence the loss in some sort, by the reformation of manners and discipline, putting a stop to the licensing clandestine marriages, and by punishing scandalous crimes, according to the rights of the ecclesiastical laws. For this purpose so many decrees and regulations were made in ecclesiastical assemblies, and especially in the council of Trent, which, Dupin likewise, tells us, were to condemn errors to preserve the purity of the faith, and to labour after the reformation of discipline.

Father Walch has given us a more particular, and I presume impartial, view of this remarkable period. — He says, That in the first part of it, the internal corruption of the church of Rome was

§ Laval's History of the Reformation in France.

|| Freeman.

|| Dupin.

* Allowance must here be made for the religious tenets of this author. I have therefore made some variations.

become such, as to exclude all external order and decency:--- in the middle it received such a shock, as it had never before felt, by the amazing progress of the reformation; and the latter part of this period was employed in preserving the wreck, and restoring, or recovering, what had been lost. This has been attended with many remarkable consequences, some of which follow.

As to the spiritual monarchy of the pope, it was at first greatly endangered by those who bore testimony to the truth, in spite of the base example of pope Pius II. and particularly by the proceedings of king Lewis XII. of France, and of the council of Pisa against pope Julius II.

But the advantage became irreparable, when gradually a considerable part of Germany, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary, and Poland, besides all England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, and Prussia, received the doctrine of the reformation, and withdrew entirely from their obedience to the see of Rome.---Besides this, those nations, which still adhered to the doctrine of the church of Rome, not only admitted principles quite irreconcilable with the doctrine of an infallible head of the whole church, but also particularly, by the frequent complaints against the see of Rome, and their earnest solicitations for a council, threatened it with no small danger; and Charles V. was even actually employed, at least in Germany, in deciding religious points judicially.

Adrian VI. in 1522, sent a letter to the duke of Saxony and other princes, to extirpate the heretics, the Lutherans, by fire and sword, notwithstanding he confessed to them, that there were great abuses in the church of Rome, and that the ecclesiastics themselves stood greatly in need of reformation: and even while the council of Trent were convened 1546, and denouncing their anathemas against the protestants, the pope and emperor prepared another sort of arms against them, in order to destroy their lives, as the surest means

to suppress heresy : but in this the emperor was too politic for the pope, for he took care to sell some of the churches patrimony to defray the expence.

All this incited the see of Rome to study expedients for the better support of the Roman catholic religion, and more especially of the authority of the pope, and to secure it from further declension. About this time the order of Jesuits, by the approbation and confirmation of the pope, received its entire establishment, and became a pillar, of which the papacy stood greatly in need, in 1540.

The council of Trent was very artfully made use of to answer these ends, quite contrary to its original design. The Roman legates were suffered to preside in it, and they had not the liberty of agreeing to the opinions, or resolutions, of the fathers, without the previous consent of the pope. All the doctrines, which contradicted the Romish errors, were condemned without hearing the protestants ; and all the doctrines, peculiar to the church of Rome, were solemnly confirmed ; a majority of votes was influenced to suppress the doctrines assented to by the greatest part of the doctors then present, or they were decided by an authoritative sentence from Rome, if they had the least tendency to the prejudice of the papal court : those questions, for instance, so fruitful in altercation, whether episcopacy be of divine original, and whether the pope was to be accounted the head of all churches, or of the universal church, were concluded in the affirmative without debate ; and the papal court reserved and confirmed to itself, the amendment of its own abuses ; and in the last place, it was deemed the prerogative of the pope to interpret all the decrees ; and it must be owned, that these methods had their * desired effect in those provinces where the decrees of this council were accepted without limitation : but the pope had the mor-

* Walch's History of the Popes, p. 272. See Remarks on the twenty-fourth Article of Pope Pius IV's Creed, by Burroughs.

tification to find that whole nations, especially France, Spain, and Hungary, either absolutely refused their compliance, or by their exceptions, or reservations, plainly shewed, that their opposition arose from the very doctrine therein contained of the supremacy of the pope: and hence, that very important distinction betwixt the *perfectly* and *partially* obedient sons of the holy father.

As we shall have further occasion to treat of the authority, the decisions, and decrees, of this great assembly, relating to points of doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies of the Roman church; a short account of the several sessions will be sufficient in this place *.

*Council of
Trent, 1545,
Paul III.
Pope.*

The pattern or method of proceeding in the council of Trent was taken from the latter occidental councils, and especially from the last council of Lateran, by having the several matters and things laid before several persons appointed, which were denominated particular congregations; and then it was reported to the general assembly of bishops: and this was done with great ceremony, and the decrees read at the conclusion by one of them, each of the other signifying his sentiments, by saying *placet*, or *non placet*. — We likewise find, that many of the bishops met with a design to establish the superiority of the church, and general councils over the pope; to promote a reformation in the church; and likewise with moderate dispositions towards such as might differ from them in sentiments, and recommended to their colleagues humility and charity: but this will not hold true of the majority: the pope's legates were present, and had an undue influence, as will appear in the sequel. --- One instance appeared even in the second session, when many of the council were for opening that session, with some proposals for a general reformation; but the pope's legates opposed it, and after some

* An abstract from Dr. Jurieu's *History of the Council of Trent*, and Father Paul's *History* in folio.

debate, cardinal Pool obtained, as a proper expedient, that the symbol of the Nicene, or creed of the church of Rome, should be confirmed; some made a jest of that, as it had been received in the church for twelve hundred years; however, the more penetrating saw through the policy of that scheme, viz. that nothing might afterwards be proposed in opposition to it. — The third session was principally taken up with the progress that the reformation made in Germany; the elector Palatine having re-established the communion under both kinds, the marriage of priests, and the service in the vulgar tongue; which gave great offence to the pope's legates. --- In the fourth session, pursuant to the order given by the pope, they proceeded to take under their consideration the *scriptures*. This was reduced to four heads, chiefly relative to such points as were intended to be condemned in the protestants, viz. the sufficiency of holy scripture, and the necessity of traditions; the second, of the canonical books and their number; the third was about the authority of the vulgar translation, and the necessity of having recourse to the originals; and the fourth related to the proper interpreters of scripture: and it was concluded, that all matters and things condemned should be by Anathema.

In the fourth session they also entered upon the doctrine of original sin, to which there was a great opposition: they discussed some of the subtleties of that question, as, How Adam's sin, which consisted in the transgression of a law, could be conveyed or transmitted to his posterity? and nine articles of the Zuinglians were condemned as not expressive, or consistent, with the doctrine of original sin, though they admitted a depravity or corruption of nature. The prelates dispute much, but appear to be ignorant of the point, or the arguments, of the Zuinglians. This introduced a dispute concerning the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin. --- The fifth session related to preachers, in which the mendicant monks took possession of the pul-

pits, but residencies enjoined upon them. --- In the sixth session the subjects of grace and justification, in which the point of absolute predestination, final perseverance, and the imputed righteousness of Christ, were taken into their consideration; and at length the decrees were made with great ambiguity, and with such provisions, as permitted the pope, or the church, finally to determine it. --- In the seventh session the council discussed the points of baptism and extreme unction: their ordinances on these points were merely trifling, notwithstanding they bestowed anathemas on such who did not deem them sacred; some abuses from plurality of benefices were mentioned, but it terminated in the authority of dispensations. --- The eighth session was concerning the removal of the council to Bologna, which passed in the affirmative.

The ninth session, and first of Bologna, settled only the formularies of the assembly. In 1547, a diet at Augsburg was held, in which they promised to submit to that council; nevertheless, when the council did not coincide with their principles, they acted in opposition to it, more from policy than regard to truth, and though much in favour of protestants, and liberty of conscience, was not regarded by many of them as substantial and lasting.

In 1549 pope Paul died. Julius III. succeeded him, who was prevailed on, by the emperor, to re-establish the council at Trent, wherein the emperor was to preside, and the protestants of Augsburg have free liberty to be heard concerning the points of faith in which they differed from the church of Rome: but we meet with no such happy consequences arising from it, neither in the eleventh nor twelfth session. However, in the thirteenth session, the council enters upon business, chooses the point of the eucharist for doctrine, and the jurisdiction of bishops for reformation; the first of these was debated for some time: at length, decreed, that communion in one kind was sufficient, and pronounced anathemas

anathema's against such as denied the real presence, transubstantiation, the adoration, of the host, &c.

In 1521 was held the congregation, consisting only of doctors of the canon law, for handling the matter of discipline, which is the original of the jurisdiction of the tribunals of the church. This congregation was held at Trent, but did not interfere with the council of prelates. Gropper votes for the abolishing an ecclesiastical tribunal, and wrote against it. This introduced the original of degradations, &c.

The thirteenth session of the council of Trent confirmed the decrees and anathemas of the council, in the former session, against those who denied the communion in one kind, the real presence, &c. Penance, extreme unction, and the reformation in favour of the episcopal jurisdiction, were points determined; but they could not agree with respect to decrees, which were therefore referred to some future time; afterwards was re-assumed in the third convocation of the council under pope Pius IV.

The fourteenth session, the council refuse to hear the protestants, notwithstanding the emperor's promise; however, a new, safe conduct was obtained for some of the protestants of Wirtemberg and Bohemia, and audience was given to the ambassadors of Saxony, which principally engaged the attention of the council the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth sessions: however. in August, 1552, the landgrave of Hesse was enlarged, liberty of conscience granted under certain restrictions, and banished ministers recalled.

In 1553, another remarkable event intervened. Edward VI. king of England died, July 6, and Mary, his sister, succeeded to the throne, who pretended at first, that she would alter nothing in religion, though she was a Roman catholic; but this promise was soon counteracted by her attempts to introduce the Roman catholic religion into these kingdoms.

In 1555, a diet was called at Augsburg, for composing the troubles in religion, during which the pope died.

died. Paul IV. succeeded him, whose character was that of proud and insolent. The diet made a decree in favour of liberty of conscience, which so displeased the pope, that he listened to the persuasions of some, to support his authority by the sword ; but party quarrels with princes seem to have diverted him from the intention he had formed.

In 1558, Mary, queen of England, died, and her sister, Elizabeth, succeeded, which was looked upon as a mortal blow to the see of Rome. She thought it to no purpose to dissemble, with respect to her principles ; and therefore sent advice to her sisters ambassador at Rome, and ordered him to acquaint the pope of her advancement to the throne. The pope answered, that she had been very bold to take the crown and name of queen without his leave.

In 1561, the pope, by his bull, invites not only catholic but protestant princes to the council of Trent, and dispatches the abbot Martimengo to the queen of England ; but, as soon as it was known to her, she forbade him to enter her dominions. A conference was likewise appointed at Poissy, between the Roman catholics and the protestants. The council at Trent met in 1562, called the seventeenth session, or the first of the third convocation, in which the books written in support of heresy, as they termed it, were ordered to be suppressed, and an edict published for the safe conduct of the German protestants. In the eighteenth session, they enter upon the point of the residence of bishops, and the question, If it be of divine right ? was started and argued with great warmth, which lasted the nineteenth session. In the twentieth, they re-assumed the dispute of communion in both kinds, and concluded it again in the negative ; and it was confirmed in the twenty-first session, then the matter of the sacrifice of the mass was chosen for their deliberation. This head was divided into thirteen articles, wherein were comprehended all the controversies about that subject, which are at this day argued between the church of

Rome

Rome and the protestants, viz. Whether the mass be a propitiatory sacrifice? Whether it derogates from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? Whether Jesus Christ, by saying, *Do this*, hath appointed the sacrifice of his body? Whether private masses be lawful and good? Whether it be lawful to celebrate masses in honour of saints? Whether the ceremonies of the mass are good and holy? Whether there be errors in the canon of the mass? Whether the words of consecration ought to be pronounced with a low voice? with other questions of little importance.

The French stayed at the council with very little satisfaction; for they saw that matters of the highest moment were determined with very little regard to the prelates of their nation, and by the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian bishops, and that all proposals to a reformation were over-ruled by a number of pensionary bishops, asserting, that the court of Rome was mistress of all deliberations, as well as propositions; so that the giving or with-holding the cup from the laity was referred to the decision of the pope.

The twenty-second session affords us further proof, that the bishops were ill satisfied of the infallibility of the council; and the ambassadors of France received new orders from their court, for asserting their disapprobation of the measures taken by the council. The sacrament of orders was handled, and whether the Holy Ghost be given in ordination; which was determined in the affirmative. The Germans question the divine right of episcopacy, which occasioned very warm debates.

The French begin the new year, 1563, with thirty-four new demands, relating to abuses, which greatly alarmed the pope when communicated to him. A decree is sent from Rome concerning the pope's authority, which met with much contradiction. They likewise debated the subject of marriages and divorce, and of the celibacy of priests; wherein it was concluded, that it could not be said, without heresy, that

that a priest could marry notwithstanding their vow. The pope, much dissatisfied with the conduct of some of the French, ordered the tribunal of the inquisition to proceed against them.

The twenty-third and twenty-fourth session turned upon some difference that had arisen between the pope and the king of France, and with the queen of Navarre, on the suspicion of heresy.

The twenty-fifth and last session of this council, held Dec. 3, 1563, the prelates and ambassadors went to church with the usual ceremonies, when Jerome Ragazzoni, titular bishop of Nazianzo, made a sermon in praise of the council, recapitulated the good laws and ordinances which were made in it, and read the decrees concerning purgatory, the intercession and invocation of saints, images, and their worship; they also read the decree for reformation of monks, containing twenty chapters, and one was added to shield the pope's authority, and to leave him in full liberty to dispense with all the canons. --- The second day they also read the decrees concerning indulgences, the choice of meats, fasts, and holy days; they made an act of reference to the pope about the index expurgatorius, missals, breviaries, ceremonials, and the care of making a catechism.

This last session of the council gave as little satisfaction as the rest had done; for after all the fair promises of setting about a reformation, there was nothing of importance effected, except some regulations that properly belonged to civil government. Germany slighted the council to the highest degree; for the prelates of this nation had not been present in the last convocation; very few bishops from Hungary or Poland; none at all from England, Swedeland, Denmark, or the Low Countries; the French bishops came only at the latter end; and including the Spaniards, they did not exceed the number of forty: all the rest were Italians, to the number of 150, and therefore it had the name of the Council of the Pope and the Italians. The pope, on

the 26th of December, gave the bull of confirmation, wherein he forbids, under pain of excommunication, the publishing of any commentaries, or observations, upon the councils, ordaining, in all doubtful cases, recourse to be had to the holy see.

What regard was paid to this council by the French, is evident from the following citation: for, at the closing of the council of Trent, Du Ferrier, the king's ambassador, entered his protest against every thing of a civil nature, that had been transacted in that assembly. We find, by a letter of John de Mervilliers to his nephew, the bishop of Rennes, ambassador to the court of Vienna, dated from Fontainebleau the third of March, that "As soon as the cardinal was returned from the council, the presidents of the parliament and the king's council, were summoned to court to see the decrees and acts of that assembly; and the matter being debated, the attorney general said, That with regard to the doctrine, the parliament did not intend to meddle with it, but held every thing as sound and orthodox, that was determined in a general and lawful council: but, as for the decrees of discipline and reformation, they had found in several things, derogatory to the rights and privileges of the Gallican church, and therefore to be rejected*."

Further means for promoting the grand point of the pope's supremacy, were the inquisition of Italy, the Jesuits, the Missions prohibiting books, and other measures to divest all temporal sovereigns from any jurisdiction in spiritual affairs. --- These things sufficiently shew the pope's design to erect an universal supremacy; yet, in the exercise of it; the pope's hands have been tied by the cardinals and congregations. --- This power seemed to increase, and the popes became more and more shackled, which no pope better understood than Sixtus V. who first conceived that protestantism might accidentally be turned to the advantage of the pope; but this project was defeated by the general constitution of Europe, the pragmatic sanction.

* Henault, abridged by Nugent, p. i. p. 416.

CENTURY THE SEVENTEENTH.

In this century we find the popes have been more concerned for the preservation than the increase of their power and authority, and they seem to have been thoroughly sensible of the necessity of such conduct.

Their spiritual monarchy, in its external limits, has, doubtless, been rather contracted than extended, though the persecutions of the protestants in Germany, Hungary, and France, have not indeed been totally without effect. The several accessions of great princes to the church of Rome have not been detrimental to the pope; and the missions, among the heathens and Eastern nations, have unquestionably contributed something to the propagation of the Romish faith.

But it would be no difficulty to shew, that all these means have been far from answering their end in the manner expected; that the endeavours used for bringing back the protestants under the old yoke, especially in England, have miscarried; that the protestants, by a closer union, and the progressive increase of their power, have gradually, in effect, weakened Roman catholic houses; and the propagation of popery has been not a little restrained by public laws*.

It is only in the writings of the bigots of Rome, and in the professorial chains of the Jesuits, that the inward constitution of this supremacy remains unaltered; for if, instead of looking into the Roman catechism for what ought to take place, we consider the actual state of things, we must admit the observation of Monsieur Voltaire, though made some time since, "That in the opinion of the great, at least, the infallibility of the pope, with the power founded in it, is a chimera, not believed even at Rome, and yet

* An Abstract from Walch's History of Papacy. See also Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, and Laval's History of the Reformation in France.

maintained; and the pope, a sacred person, whose feet are to be kissed, but his hands bound †.

The justice of this idea of the pope and his infallibility appears from all the transactions with the crowns of France, Spain, Sardinia, Naples, the republic of Venice, and even the house of Austria.

It is still more evident, that in church affairs, and even in cases relating to the persons of ecclesiastics and church-lands, the temporal princes and states have discovered and asserted their ancient rights; that in France those obnoxious decrees of the councils of Constance and Basil have not been admitted as articles of faith; that the papal bulls are no further submitted to, than as they correspond with the prevailing maxims of the state; that, on these accounts, the popes are very cautious of hazarding a decision in doctrinal controversies; that none prove more refractory sons of the Roman father than the Jesuits, when his will and their's happen to clash.

Of late the pope has not been allowed to make any new conquest. Castro, Renciglione, Comacchio, Parma, and Placentia, are clear proofs that it was never imagined the successors of St. Peter were to bring armies into the field; and the forwardness of any to make good their pretensions that way, of which there have been too many instances, is looked upon as a disgrace to the character of a pope.

The elections of popes are more and more carried on by intrigue, but, at the same time, more and more corrupt: the principal authority and influence of the pope seem rather to unite or center in the courts

† Walch, before cited, p. 298, who adds by way of note—The pretended belief of this article at Rome, may be seen in Bianchi's *Treatise Della Potestà e della Politia della Chiesa*, written in opposition to that friend of liberty, Giannoni. There is also a work, lately drawn up by the inquisition, concerning papal power, to depose kings, or discharge their subjects, from their oath of allegiance; which piece would probably have met with a better reception in the twelfth century. See Voltaire's *Siecle de Louis XIV.*

of Madrid and Rome, than at Versailles or any other court.

With respect to doctrine and ceremonies, notwithstanding the council of Trent adjusted matters of this nature, for the most part, not only by decrees of the council, but in all difficult matters referred to the future decision of the pope; yet we find, very early in this century, many disputes were agitated, viz. The controversy concerning grace and free-will, held at Louvain before Clement VIII. and Paul V. the pope published a decree in 1611, by which he ordered, that nothing should be published, relating to these matters, upon any pretence whatsoever. This decree was renewed by Urban VIII. 1625, but those prohibitions had no effect; for there appeared a variety of treatises of both sides upon these matters.

Another dispute was revived concerning ecclesiastical and political authority. This was chiefly managed between the lawyers and the divines. It was occasioned by the pope's interdict of the republic of Venice, and was calculated to maintain, on one hand, the authority of the senate, to make such laws as concerned the civil state of that republic; and that the pope had no right to publish an interdict on that account. This dispute terminated in favour of the rights of princes, in opposition to the pretended authority of the pope.

Janfenism prevailed greatly in France about the middle of this century, which occasioned three assemblies of the clergy at Paris, in 1653, 1654, and 1655, who drew up a formulary, in order to terminate the dispute, which was confirmed by the king's mandamus.

Another dispute in this century was concerning the frequency of receiving the communion, which was managed with some warmth, but admitted of no satisfactory decision.

But a controversy of more importance took place about the year 1680, between the clergy of France

and the court of Rome, about the regale. The regale is a right, by which the king enjoys the revenues of the archbishoprics and bishoprics of the kingdom, and confers benefices during the vacancy of the sees, till such time as the incumbent has taken the oath of allegiance; and this the king claimed as a right that did belong to him universally throughout his dominion, except two or three provinces. Pope Innocent XI. seemed determined to oppose his claim: at length, in 1681, was held a national council, or general council of the clergy, to regulate this dispute, who acknowledged his majesty's right of the regale over all churches of the kingdom, and comprised the whole matter in four articles: 1. That kings and princes are not subject to the ecclesiastical power, as to their temporals. 2. That the decrees of the council of Constance, concerning the authority of general councils, ought to remain in full force and virtue. 3. That the use of ecclesiastical power ought to be moderated by the canons. 4. That, although the sovereign pontiff has the first place in matters of faith, though his decrees regard all churches, and each church in particular, yet his judgment is not infallible, unless it be followed by the consent of the church.*

CENTURY THE EIGHTEENTH.

The history of this century we shall attempt in a general way, by enquiring a little further into the nature of the papal power, the prerogatives and influence of this spiritual monarchy, as it was exercised immediately preceding the reformation, and which the present principles of that church direct and countenance them in the exercise of.

If we consider, that the popes rise to that dignity from very inferior stations, were heretofore frequently, and are still sometimes, of mean families, without any

* See a larger Account of these Matters, Dupin, Cent. xvii.

support from kindred or relations, deriving a great part of their revenues from the subjects of other princes, and this in virtue of their claiming a greater share in their allegiance, exercising an authority grounded only in opinion, and frequently assuming a superiority over those, to whom they have not been themselves in obedience ; when this is duly considered, we cannot help wondering, that this ecclesiastical empire has stood so long, grown up to so great a height, and continues yet to enjoy a green old age, that does not seem to betray any symptoms of a speedy dissolution.

But, upon a nearer and closer inspection, we shall find, that this spiritual monarchy, like some of the leaning towers that have been so famous in history, tho' it seems to carry evident marks of weakness, is, in fact, a structure very strong in itself, contrived with great skill, as well as erected with much art. If in other monarchies princes have pretended to a divine right, the pope goes still further, and claims a kind of divine power, by which he is raised as much above other princes, as those princes are above their people. This claim, together with the title of Holiness, having the recommendation of a long prescription, cannot but excite an high veneration in the minds of such as believe it, the papal character being given with the greatest ceremony, by those who are presumed to be the best judges of religion ; and the religious interest seem, in the opinion of the multitude, to alter the very nature of him who is adorned therewith, and to transform him, from a man of like passions with themselves, into a sacred person. It is true, that, in protestant countries, as nothing of this is believed, so it is very hard to be understood ; yet the fact is beyond dispute : and, whatever wiser persons in popish kingdoms may conceive, the bulk of the people have the highest reverence for the holy father.

The close connection between the clergy in all popish countries and the court of Rome, joined to the occasional benefits that monarchs themselves may receive by

bulls from the holy see, makes them unwilling to interpose or break off that commerce which their subjects have with Rome, that, upon certain occasions, they may derive favours from thence, which may easily procure what otherwise might with difficulty be obtained by their own authority. The subjection of the clergy to a foreign head, makes them sometimes more tractable to their natural sovereigns than they otherwise would be, since the good-will and friendship of a single person is more easily attained than the direction of many; and besides, in those cases, there can be no appeal to the people; because, in all such disputes, they think an entire submission the duty of the clergy. We may add to this another reason, which is, that the popish princes cherish the spiritual power of the pope, as the means of preserving unity in religious disputes, which very seldom disturb the church without disturbing the state also. Thus it appears that, independent of enthusiasm and superstition, political principles have no small share in promoting that adherence to the see of Rome, which, at first sight, seems so irreconcilable to the absolute authority of sovereign princes, and which, notwithstanding, by their dexterous management, is often made to co-operate therewith.

As to the interior strength of the papal government, we need only reflect, that the advantages of birth are well supplied by the great parts, and other qualifications, with which a man must be necessarily endowed, who is promoted to this dignity. His being obliged to celibacy is another point of great consequence, inasmuch as it prevents the changing this elective into an hereditary sovereignty, which would be entirely repugnant to the fundamental maxims of this constitution. We may add to this, the precautions taken in electing a person far advanced in years, which leaves no room for attempting to alter the settled principles of the government; and all great politicians allow, that it is the sacrificing these to the interest of a family, or to the private advantage of the reigning prince, that opens a way

way to the ruin of the best-digested systems. It has also been an old rule in the conclave, never to elect two popes of the same family or faction, or even of the same disposition, in immediate succession, for the same reason. In short, it would be endless to enumerate particulars; but the character of the church of Rome, in respect to policy, has always stood so high, is to be thought the best school for training ministers in all the popish monarchies, from whence also it draws great advantages.

We must not, however, imagine from hence, that because the fundamental maxims of the see of Rome have been always the same, the administration of the government has been exactly uniform, since, considering the vast variations in mens tempers and habits in different ages, this must appear a thing absolutely impossible: neither ought we to imagine, that any constitution could be so framed, as to extinguish in the minds of princes all natural regard to their families: but on the one hand, such has been the skill and capacity of these spiritual monarchs, that from time to time they have made such prudent alterations in their exterior conduct, as hath perfectly kept up that relation between the church and the court of Rome, upon which their authority depends: they have likewise, on the other, reduced their family tendernesses into a kind of system, by which the nepotism of the Roman pontiffs has been in many reigns subservient to the interest of the state, as well as agreeable to the inclination of the popes, who thought they could never trust their affairs in so safe hands for themselves, as with those who must be conscious, that their wealth, their influence, and their power, must, in a great measure, determine with the life of him from whom they were received, and that, besides, they must, from that moment, lie open to the strictest enquiries possible into their past conduct.

One may, with great truth and impartiality, venture to assert, that the whole scheme of the Romish religion

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is admirably well adjusted to maintain, in every respect, the power of the supreme head : he is reputed infallible, that his decisions may have the greater weight : the traditions of the church, which, with the members of it, pass for a rule of faith, are subject to his controul ; all religious doctrines are liable to his censure ; the power of absolution, even in the highest cases, is attributed to him ; he dispenses the treasures of the church, I mean spiritual treasures, such as pardons and indulgences ; he grants dispensations of all kinds ; he regulates fasts and feasts at his pleasure : in a word, being reputed the successor of St. Peter, and the visible head of the Christian church, he has prerogatives without bounds, and without number ; so that it is no surprising thing at all, that so much power, directed by so great policy, should be able to perform such mighty things, and to preserve itself for so many ages.

But our estimate of this power would be extremely imperfect, if we did not take notice of the several ranks and orders of men subject, in an especial manner, to the holy see ; and which, without any great impropriety in the term, may be styled the spiritual forces of his holiness. In the first class of these stand the cardinals, who are acknowledged princes of the church, and pretend to the next in dignity to crowned heads ; they were originally no more than the parish priests of Rome, and their number sometimes greater, sometimes less ; but now it is fixed to seventy-two, in allusion to Christ's disciples : heretofore a cardinal was content to be styled his excellency ; but now they assume the title of eminence, which was formerly given to princes, and thereupon the latter took the title of highness ; the cardinals are of all nations, that the influence arising from the hopes of this dignity may be the more extensive : the nomination to hats by crowned heads is a new stroke of Romish policy, which heightens the dependence upon the holy see, while it seems to lessen the papal authority ; the majority, however, are chiefly Italians, to prevent the throne from being filled by a stranger ; and it is provided,

vided, that in all elections the person chosen shall have the voices of two thirds of those who enter the conclave, that there may never be a strong faction against the pope amongst the cardinals, which might be attended with ill consequences. All the subordinate dignities of the church may be considered as the nobility in the pope's spiritual empire.

But as in all others, so in this, the strength of the monarchy consists in the number of its subjects ; and if we take into our view the secular and regular clergy in the church of Rome, the former bound by the most sacred ties, and the latter not by vows only, but by their interests to the obedience of the holy see, we cannot but entertain a high opinion of its power ; since long ago it was the calculation of a certain sovereign, that in Europe he had three hundred thousand parishes, and fifty thousand convents, subject to his jurisdiction, who, more or less, upon different occasions, resort to Rome, and carry hither an immense treasure. And it is very easy to discern, that nothing has been neglected which could possibly contribute to render the foundations of this monarchy firm and strong : the most important trust of educating youth is entirely in their hands who are devoted to the service of the holy see ; the Jesuits are particularly famous for their application in this respect, and when they have received the first tincture of literature, such as are sent to compleat their studies at the universities, meet with the same doctrine and discipline ; and whatever the science be to which they apply, veneration for the pope is a thing so frequently insisted on, and so strongly impressed, that it is almost impossible they should ever lose it while they remain at those seminaries of learning, and attend the offices of the church. Besides these, the number of inferior clergy, who enjoy ecclesiastical benefices of all sorts, are so numerous, and afford such ample maintenance, and such agreeable prospects to men of all ranks and tempers, in conjunction with the canon law, which is peculiar to this spiritual monarchy, that the most effectual provision is made

made for a constant succession of persons, bound to support that interest, which is the support of themselves and all their pretensions.

As these are bound by affection, and by finding their own account, to a constant submission, so the proper methods have been taken for subjecting the laics in that church also to such an obedience as they cannot well break through. Amongst these we may reckon auricular confession, masses for the dead, the direction of female consciences, the opportunities they have of working upon persons in their dying moments; and many more circumstances that might be mentioned, favourable to their interest, afford us a reasonable probability that the papal authority will not decline much more than it has already done, especially if succeeding popes imitate the moderation of their immediate predecessors, and endeavour to support their influence rather by address than by the force of ecclesiastical censures, which is a sort of artillery that no longer does the execution it did in the darker ages, when the little learning there was remained entirely among the priests and the monks.

The reader will apprehend this more clearly, if he takes a short view of the European powers, that still profess obedience to the see of Rome. In Poland the clergy are numerous and well provided for, having a great share of power allotted them by the constitution, and are for the most part composed of the younger sons of the nobility. --- In Germany it is visible, that the popish religion rather prevails than declines, and the ecclesiastical electors and other prelates are so formidable a body in the diet, as not to be apprehensive of any future secularizations. It is, besides, the interest of several great houses to support the church, as it is now constituted, on the score of the preferments, which are in a manner entailed on the younger sons of their family, so as not only to afford them noble establishments, but also render them capable of supporting the head of their house, instead of being a burthen upon him, as would be the case if those dignities were secularized.

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—The hereditary countries of the house of Austria remain strictly attached to the see of Rome. --- The French, or Gallican church has, indeed, always claimed a kind of freedom, which having been improved by the struggles that have been heretofore made against them, the modern popes have wisely had recourse to another method, which seems to have had a better effect, and whilst the courts of Rome and Versailles agree, both will find their account in the reciprocal support of each other's power. --- In Spain and Portugal the papal authority stands upon a much stronger foundation, as appears from the amazing wealth of the clergy in the former, and the joy with which the sovereign of the latter accepted very lately, from the pope, the title of *Most Faithful*, (conferred by a bull from the pope, Jan. 1749) as well as many instances of a superstitious regard to the doctrines and practices of that church. --- In Italy the influence of the pope extends every where; and he is so able to make either his favour or his displeasure felt, that all the princes and states of his communion, find it their interest to live upon good terms with his holiness, and as none understand their own interest better, are like to continue in the same inclinations, received from their ancestors, in that respect.

It has been generally supposed, that one of the maxims of the see of Rome has been, attaching itself to the superior interest, and always courting that power most which is uppermost; and, in proof of this, much has and may be said: but at the same time it is very certain, that the true interest of the holy see consists in supporting the balance of power, because its influence depends chiefly upon an equality among the princes of that communion; and if any of these should gain an entire ascendancy, the see of Rome could not fail of feeling the first effects of it. This is not only evident in speculation, but from experience likewise.—The truth is, that while the court of Rome continues famous for policy, we can never expect her falling from this maxim; for as, in decency, it imports the holy
father

father to shew an equal affection for all who profess themselves his children, whereby he may best secure their reciprocal affection, duty and confidence*.

These points may be further illustrated, were we to consider his temporal authority, which the Roman pontiff enjoys in consequence of his dominions in Italy and elsewhere. He is lord of considerable territories, and possessed of gold and silver, which St. Peter, even admitting him to have been bishop of Rome, certainly did not bequeath to the see. What the dominions of the pope are, what his revenues and riches, nor whether these are lawful possessions, is not my province to enquire. It is not only probable, but unquestionable, that these are more the support of his supremacy and authority in the church, than any real persuasion of his infallibility and divine right; though to establish such sentiments hath been made the study and business of the Jesuits.

1713. Pope Clement XI. was prevailed with by the Jesuits at Paris, to issue the bull *Unigenitus*, which chiefly relates to points of dispute between the Jansenists and the Dominicans, and for establishing the pope's authority. This bull, besides being an evidence that the pope may err, both in matters of faith and historical facts, proved the means of greatly endangering the authority of the pope; it kindled a flame in France which spread over the whole Romish church: broke out more violently after the death of Lewis XIV. The new king of Sicily would not part with his monarchy; and the zeal which the pope manifested, served only to increase the papal pensioners, among whom was now the Pretender, as he could no longer stay in France; for the bull, which begins with the pastoral office, made no impressions in France; and from the growing opposition that was made to it, not only in France, but in the Low Countries and Germany, he found it necessary to use his best efforts in its defence; but

* Abstract from the present State of Europe, p. 423.

finding himself unequal to the task, he consented at length to some overtures.

Benedict XIII. discovered a more pacific disposition, and was much disappointed in the great good he expected from the Jesuits; for he found them more active in support of the bull Unigenitus than he could have wished. However, notwithstanding cardinal de Noailles, and cardinal Fleury, &c. subscribed it, Benedict always continued a staunch Dominican. He published the bull Petrosus, which the Jesuits will hardly admit to be a just exposition of the doctrine of grace. We must not omit this pope's pacific disposition, to reconcile the Roman, Greek, Lutheran, and reformed parties; and is more famous for personal endowments, especially learning, than for the prosperity of his pontificate.

The intrigues and clashings among the several Roman catholic courts, and the ambitious schemes of the cardinals (who now obtained the title of Eminences), the artifice and industry of the Jesuits and other orders of priests, served to weaken the power and influence of the popes. The occurrences of latter times convince us, that the measures, particularly of the Jesuits, rendered them suspected of being so entirely the emissaries of the pope, as to disturb the peace and tranquillity of kingdoms.

The late extirpations of the order of Jesuits, in Portugal and in France, are undeniable proofs that the pope's authority is no longer absolute, but limited and restrained, where the Jesuits have attempted an undue influence, or their principles, and their numbers, riches, and unconstitutional measures, have been found inconvenient, or prejudicial to the civil state of the kingdom.

In latter times the progress of arts and sciences, and of learning in general, may reasonably be supposed to be a very considerable means of limiting that unbounded power and authority of the pope, so long usurped, and to weaken and destroy such attempts as were made
upon

upon the rights of princes, and at the same time to remove that unreasonable superstition that too generally prevailed in the minds of the common people for whatever had the sanction of papal authority; and this is equally applicable to those errors and corruptions in doctrine, worship, and ceremonies, that have in process of time prevailed in that church; many of the grossest of them sprung up in the darkest and most barbarous ages of christianity, when learning degenerated into fabulous legends and monkish stories, when to understand Greek, and other languages, was suspected, and to believe the Antipodes was esteemed heresy; then was the time to impose on an undiscerning age, and to obtrude upon their understanding the belief of miracles performed by the relics of departed saints, and many doctrines, such as purgatory, transubstantiation, &c. which are not only unscriptural, but repugnant both to reason and common sense.

In the two last centuries the increase of knowledge, hath produced various effects among persons of different ranks: those, whose interest or prepossessions have not rendered them the friends and abettors of papal authority, and impositions on the consciences of men under various pretensions, and have seen the inconsistency of many of their doctrines, practices, and ceremonies, with genuine Christianity, have paid only an external regard to their ceremonies, to avoid ecclesiastical or civil penalties: some have looked with indifference on all the outward forms and modes of religion, whilst many have fallen into direct infidelity; and deism is now too general among the politer part of the inhabitants both in Italy and France.

This may suffice as a preliminary to the present state of religion in the church of Rome, constitution, doctrine, &c.



CHAP. II.

Of the present constitution, discipline, doctrine, worship, and ceremonies of the church of Rome.

THE church is defined by the council of Trent to be the one, visible, holy, and catholic, that is universal, established by God on a solid basis, who has bestowed on it the power of opening the gates of heaven to all true believers, and shutting them to all heretics and infidels: it likewise has the power of pardoning and absolving sins, and excommunicating all such as are disobedient*. --- This church is both triumphant and militant: the former is *The illustrious society of those blessed spirits and saints, who having triumphed over the world, the flesh and the devil, enjoy everlasting happiness in peace and security*: the latter is the congregation of all true believers upon earth, who are constantly obliged, during their whole lives, to resist the world, the flesh and the devil. --- Jesus Christ is the immediate governor of that part of the church which is triumphant in the heavens; but as the church militant required a visible head or director, he has substituted one in his room, who is accounted, by all true catholics, as the sole and sovereign depository of the faith, and perpetual director of the belief, of all true Christians†, who is commissioned to promote some of them to the highest preferments in heaven‡, and to confer on others such briefs as will one day entitle them thereunto§: it must not here be objected, that he breaks

* Catechism of the council of Trent.

† Monsieur Picart's Edition of the Religious Ceremonies and Customs of all Nations, vol. i. p. 284.

‡ The Canonization of Saints.

§ Beatification.

in upon the prerogative of Jesus Christ, since on the contrary no true believer can enter into heaven, but through the recommendation of this his visible vicegerent *. This supremacy and dignity is conferred on the bishop of Rome; and if it be asked, upon what authority they ground these boasted claims and prerogatives, as well as the foundation in general of their doctrines, worship, and ceremonies, they will freely declare, that the tradition of the ancient fathers, and the authority of councils, something beside the scriptures and distinct from it, they acknowledge as of equal authority, the rule of their faith and practice.

I. But, in the first place, it may be proper to observe, that the bishop of Rome is by way of pre-eminence, stiled POPE, a name derived from the Latin word *papa*. Their doctrines are from thence denominated popery, and the members of that church papist. This church is likewise called Roman catholic, because the bishop of Rome is not only stiled supreme, but oecumenical or universal bishop: this title was first confirmed by Phocus to pope Boniface III. about 600 years after Christ †: the pope is likewise stiled holiness in the abstract, God's vicegerent, vicar of Jesus Christ, successor of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and father of all the kings of the earth ‖. He wears three keys; one as an emblem of his power to give absolution, or of admitting into the kingdom of heaven; another to denote his power of excommunicating sinners; and the third, with much ceremony, is delivered unto him, to signify and imply his universal knowledge and infalli-

§ Picart, *ibid*.

* Monsieur Picart, from whose edition of this work, illustrated with his own cuts, we have selected many extracts, was educated in the religion of the Roman catholics, and resided at Paris till, upon his favouring some protestant principles, he found it necessary to retire to Holland. This work was originally wrote by Leo of Modena, a rabbi of Venice, 1637. He appears in general to be impartial.

† Dr. Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 26.

‖ Mr. Bernard Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. i. p. 299.

bility;

bility; and he wears a tripple crown to inform the Christian world, that he is priest, emperor, and king. And, we may with great truth and impartiality assert, that the whole scheme of the Romish religion is admirably well adjusted to maintain, in every respect, the power of the supreme head: he is reputed infallible that his decisions may have the greater weight. --- The traditions of the church are subject to his controul: all religious doctrines are liable to his censure: the power of absolution, even in the highest cases, are attributed to him: he dispenses the treasures of the church, I mean spiritual treasures, such as pardons and indulgences: he grants dispensations of all kinds: he regulates fasts and feasts at his pleasure: in a word, being St. Peter's successor and visible head of the Christian church, he has prerogatives without bounds and without number*.

Dr. Barrow† has drawn up the claims of the pontiff as follows: that to the pope, as sovereign monarch, by sanction of the whole church, do appertain royal prerogatives, called *regalia petri*, in the oath prescribed to the bishops, such as these which follow:

To be superior to the whole church, and to its representatives, in a general synod of bishops: --- to convocate general synods at his pleasure, all bishops being obliged to attend at his summons: to preside in synods so as to suggest matter, promote, obstruct, and over-rule, all the debates in them: to confirm, or invalidate, their determinations, giving life to them by his assent, or subtracting it by his dissent: to define points of doctrine, or to decide points of controversy authoritatively: to enact, suspend, dispense with, ecclesiastical laws and canons: to relax or evacuate ecclesiastical censures, by indulgence and pardon: to make void promises, oaths, and obligations to laws, by his dispensations: to be the fountain of all jurisdiction and dignity: to be himself

* Present State of Europe, p. 426.

† Dr. Barrow's Works, 4to edit. p. 31.

accountable for none of his doings, exempt from judgment, and liable to no reproof—to summon and commissionate soldiers by croisade, to fight against and destroy infidels.

But though this is in general admitted, we ought here to observe, there are diversity of sentiments with respect to vesting this power solely in the person of the pope. The Jesuits, and almost all the several orders of monks, in Italy, profess to believe, I. That the pope alone is infallible, and have attempted to prove it in their disputes with the Jansenists. But this appearing too gross a supposition, has been denied by Bellarmine*, and disclaimed by pope Adrian, &c.†

II. Others assert, that infallibility is lodged not in the pope, but in a general council only. Thus it was agreed in the councils of Constance and Basil; and this is the opinion of the Gallican church in general ‡, and of several learned doctors elsewhere §.

III. That a pope and a general council together, are infallible, i. e. That when a general council is called by the pope, when he resides in it, either in person or by his legates, and when he confirms its decrees; then they are infallible: they cannot possibly err, and ought to be implicitly submitted to and obeyed ||.

IV. Others are of opinion, that infallibility is only in the church universal, i. e. diffusively in the whole mystical body of Christ, consisting of all its members here upon earth, so as that, though neither pope nor council, nor any particular church, are infallible, yet when their decrees are received and submitted to by the catholic church, they then become infallibly true and absolutely

* Bellarmine de Fontiſſice, l. iv. c. ii.

† Monsieur Voltaire ſays, that the infallibility of the pope, with the power founded in it, is a chimera not believed even at Rome; and yet it is maintained—that the pope is a ſacred perſon, whoſe feet are to be kiſſed, but his hands bound.

‡ Ibid. Creſſy in Exomolog. in the Appendix, ch. iv. numb. 7. Holden de Reſolutione Fide, l. ii. ch. i.

§ See Walch's Preface to the Hiſtory of the Pope's.

|| Bellarmine,

binding ¶. Accordingly they build their faith and practice on tradition, and decrees of synods and councils, as of equal, if not greater authority, than the scripture. The council of Trent declared, "That the oral traditions of the catholic church, meaning the Roman, were to be received with equal piety and reverence, as the books of the Old and New Testament *; and he that despiseth the said conditions, is accursed †." Accordingly the church claim the sole right of determining what books of the Old and New Testament, shall be deemed canonical, and in what sense any particular passages of it are to be understood. And in the thirteenth articles of the catechism, composed by a committee appointed by the council of Trent, and approved by that council, it is said, that the church being instituted by God to be the guardian of the scripture and tradition, (the word written and unwritten) from her we are to receive the canonical writing. And from hence the new canon of scripture, as it is called, took its rise ‡.

Gratian declares, that the decrees of councils, and the decretals of popes, ought to be esteemed of equal authority with the sacred scriptures §. To the same purpose pope Gregory the Great ||.

The CANON law is a collection of ecclesiastical constitutions, decisions, and maxims, taken partly from scripture, partly from the ancient councils, and partly from the decrees of popes, and the reports and the sayings of the primitive fathers, whereby all matters of polity in the Romish church are regulated.

The common law, that obtained throughout the West till the twelfth century, was the collection of canons made by Dionysius Exiguus in 520; the capitularies of Charlemain, and the decrees of the popes from Sircius

¶ Bellarmine de Concil. l. ii. ch. ii.

* Pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit ac venerator. See also Wright's Scrip. and Tradition, p. 13.

† Council, Trid. Decr. de Scripturis.

‡ Mons. Picart, vol. I. p. 268.

§ Dist. 19, and 20.

|| Lib. i. epist. xxiv.

to Anastasius.—No regard was had to any thing not comprised in these; and the French still maintain the rights of the Gallican church to consist in their not being obliged to admit any thing else; but to be at liberty to reject all innovations made in the canonical jurisprudence since that compilation, as well as all papal decrees before Siricius.

Indeed, between the eighth and eleventh centuries, the canon law was mixed and confounded with the papal decrees from St. Clement to Siricius, which till then had been unknown: this gave occasion to a new reform or body of the canon law, which is the collection still extant under the title of the Concordance of the Discarding Canons, made in 1151, by Gratian, a Benedictine monk, from texts of scripture, councils, and sentiments of the fathers in the several points of ecclesiastical polity. This work he divided according to the order of matters, not of times and councils, as had been done before; so that, upon the appearance of this, all the ancient collections immediately sunk.—It is divided into three parts; the first into an hundred and eight distinctions; the second into thirty-six causes, and the third into five distinct parts: the second part of the canon law consists of the decrees of the popes from 1150, to pope Gregory IX. in 1229.

In 1297, pope Boniface continued the papal decrees as far as his time: this part the French make particular exception to, by reason of that pope's differences with their king, Philip the Fair. To these pope John XXII. added the Clementines, or the five books of the constitutions of his predecessor Clement V. And to all these were after added twenty constitutions of the said pope John, called the Extravagantes; and some other constitutions of his successors.

All these compose the body, or corpus, of the canon law, to this time, which, including the comments, makes (three volumes in folio) the rule and measure of church government*. There are a variety of other collections of

* Chambers's Dictionary.

the canons and decrees of councils, which make up the body of the canon law; which canons and ecclesiastical laws it is the business and profession of the canonists, or ecclesiastical lawyers, to study, explain, and apply with great exactness; and to vindicate their authority, and maintain an inviolable regard to them, by all the sanctions annexed to them.

But besides these ecclesiastical laws and canons, which are the bulwark of the constitution of the Romish church, there are other institutions of that church more especially calculated for preserving an uniformity of faith among Christians. These formularies or creeds are chiefly three, viz. that called the Apostles, of which we have given account, p. 30; the Nicene, p. 41; and the Athanasian, p. 56, of which a repetition is unnecessary. I shall only observe, that the Nicene creed has been ever held in great esteem by that church, and constitutes the first twelve articles of that ultimate rule of their faith and practice, pope Pius IV. creed.

The creed itself contains the substance of the decrees and canons of the council of Trent, and being usually divided into twenty-four articles, is so plausible as to express the first twelve in the very words of that creed called the Nicene, the greatest part of which most protestants profess to believe and acknowledge: but there is this great difference, as was before observed, between the manner wherein the Nicene creed is imposed in popish countries, and wherein they, who adhere to true protestant principles, receive it, or any part of it; that the one require it to be received upon an equal footing with the holy scriptures; the other believe and acknowledge the things contained in it, not because the fathers of the Nicene council so believed and so decreed; but because they apprehend, that the things themselves are contained in the holy scriptures, and so far only as they are therein contained; so that their faith is ultimately resolved into the word of God, and not into the commandments of men: herein they assert their liberty as becomes protestants*.

* Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 7.

But this, it seems, was not enough for a creed of the church of Rome : there must be some form of faith, whereby, as by an authentic act, papists must for ever be distinguished from protestants. Twelve new articles are therefore added, which are all truly Romish, and built not upon the authority of scripture, but solely upon tradition and human authority *, viz. principally the council of Trent.

The papists profess to believe the creeds themselves, from the authority of tradition, or of those councils that made or confirmed them.

The orthodox faith does not depend upon the scriptures considered absolutely in themselves, but as explained by catholic tradition. The faith was comprized and preserved in creeds, handed down from one orthodox bishop to another, whose business it was to keep this sacred *depositum* pure and undefiled, and to deliver it to his successor.—It is the most compendious way to orthodoxy to study the tradition of the church*.

It may here be proper to observe the manner in which the articles of pope Pius's creed are connected with those of the Nicene. The Nicene creed makes mention of one holy catholic and apostolic church ; and the creed of pope Pius begins with a profession of admitting and embracing the traditions, &c. of the same church ; insinuating that all the traditions of the church of Rome are traditions of the one holy catholic and apostolic church : and it is certain, that the Romanists do pretend, that all these characters belong to their church, and to that alone ; they make themselves the whole church of Christ, and exclude all others from being so much as a part of it ; they confine holiness to themselves, and confidently affirm, that their church alone is derived from the apostles †.

* Burroughs's View of Popery.

† Rhemish's Annotations on the Argument of the Epistles.

* Bishop Hare's Difficulties that attend the Study of the Scripture, p. 6.

† Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 8.

These things are not indeed expressly asserted in the XIIIth article of pope Pius's creed; but since this creed, in its XXIIIrd article, speaks expressly of the holy catholic apostolic Roman church, as the mother and mistress of all churches, it therefore evidently confines these characters to that church:—and since this creed, composed by pope Pius IV. was approved and confirmed by the council of Trent, as the rule and standard of the Roman catholic church §. To this I shall pay principal regard, as it may be explained and confirmed by Bossuet, in his Exposition of the Catholic Catechism—in the Breviary—the Catechism *ad parochos*

§ The council of Trent was the last general council, begun by pope Paul III. Dec. 15, 1545; continued by Julius III. resumed by pope Pius IV. in 1559, and ended by him Dec. 4, 1563.

The opening of this council, together with the remarkable transactions of it, and its being the final council for determining all controversies relative to religion, render it the most considerable of any.

On the 15th of December the pope's legate, with twenty-five bishops, clothed in their pontifical habits, assembled with a great number of divines, the clergy, and the regular ambassadors of the king of the Romans. The mass of the Holy Ghost was celebrated, and Cornelius Muslin made an elaborate discourse of the authority of councils, that hereby heresies were extirpated, manners reformed, schisms extinguished, crusades decreed, and even kings deposed, &c. &c. Then the president of the council demanded of the assembly, to order and declare, that the holy general council of Trent do begin, and is begun, to the glory of the Holy Trinity, the increase and exultation of the faith, and the Christian religion, the extirpation of heresy, the union of the church, the reformation of the clergy and Christian people, and the depression and extinguishing of the enemies of the Christian name; to which the prelates declare their satisfaction, by answering *placet*, and ordered the notaries to make a public act of it.—There were twenty-five sessions, in which were present seven cardinals, five whereof were the pope's legates, sixteen ambassadors from kings, princes and republics, two hundred and fifty patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, abbots and generals of orders, all divines and doctors of the civil law (a).

The proceedings and transactions of this council, their decrees, &c. shew in more legible characters the design and tendency of this council, which to use the words of a reverend prelate, was for no other end than to give the force of laws to the many abuses complained of, and thereby render the wound incurable.

—in

(a) *Peter Jurieu. History of the Council of Trent.*

—in the Catholic Christian Instructed in the Sacraments, Ceremonies, and Observations of the church, by R. C.
 —In the modest and true Account of the chief Points in Controversy between the Roman Catholics and Protestants, by N. C.—In the Profession of the Catholic Faith, extracted out of the Council of Trent—from a Vindication of the Roman Catholics—as also a piece entitled, a plain and rational Account of the Roman Catholic Faith, and such other of their books as have come under my notice.

A Summary of the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies, of the church of Rome, as contained in Pope PIUS's Creed.

Article I. *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible§. The one true and living God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost†.*

Exposition. It principally consists in believing, that he is the Creator and Lord of all things; that it is our duty to adhere to him with all the powers and faculties of the mind, through faith, hope, and charity, as being the sole object that makes us happy by the communication of that *summum bonum*, which is himself. The internal adoration, which we render unto God in spirit and in truth, is attended with external signs, whereof sacrifice is the principal, as a solemn acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over us, and of our absolute dependence on him †.

The idea of God, which nature has engraven on the minds of men, represents him as a being independent, omnipotent, all-perfect, the author of all good and all evils, that is, of all the punishments which are inflicted for sin ‡.

§ Pope Pius's Creed, Art. I.

† Cath. Christian, p. 5.

‡ Bossuet's Expos. of the Cath. Catechism, p. 3.

¶ Lamy's Introduction to the Scriptures, p. 372.

Art. II. *I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.*

Expos. I do profess to be fully assured of this most certain and necessary truth, that Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Messiah, is the true, proper, and natural Son of God, begotten of the substance of the Father, which, being incapable of division or multiplication, is so really and absolutely communicated to him, that he is of the same essence, God of God, light of light, very God of very God. I acknowledge none but him to be begotten of God by that proper and natural generation, and thereby excluding all which are not begotten, as it is a generation; all which are said to be begotten, and which are called sons, but are so only by adoption.

Art. III. *Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man*.*

Expos. That in this person, the divine and human natures were so united, that they were not confounded, but that two whole and perfect natures, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person; that of him many things are said, which are proper to one nature only.

Art. IV. *And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried.*

Expos. That this person did truly suffer in his human nature, the divine being not capable of suffering; tho' he was crucified, dead, and buried, appears from Matt. xxvii. *When by sin mankind was become obnoxious to the divine justice, he offered himself an expiatory sacrifice.*

Art. V. *And the third day rose again, according to the scriptures.*

* Profession of the Catholic Faith, p. 3.

Expos. Christ did truly rise again from death with that very body which was crucified and buried. I also knew him in the flesh, saith St. Ignatius, and believe on him: *And when he came to those who were with Peter, he said to them, Touch me, handle me, and see that I am no spirit without a body.*

Art. VI. *He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father.*

Expos. This article teaches us, that he ascended in like manner into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.

Art. VII. *And is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end.*

Expos. Our Lord's remaining in heaven till the day of judgement appears from Acts iii. 20, 21. *And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things.* And chap. x. v. 42. where St. Peter says, *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he, which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.*

Art. VIII. *I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified—who spake by the prophets.*

Expos. This article teacheth, 1. That the Holy Ghost proceeds both from the Father and the Son. 2. That he is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God. Inasmuch as such operations are ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as cannot be ascribed but to a person distinct from the Father and the Son, and therefore must be a person distinct from them both; and inasmuch as such things are ascribed to him, as cannot be ascribed to any but God, and for this reason they are co-equal and consubstantial.

Art. IX. *I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church* †.

Qu. When it is asked in the grounds of the catholic doctrine (contained in the profession of faith of pope Pius IV.) What do you gather from these words? it is answered, 1. That Jesus Christ has always a true church upon earth. 2. That this church is always one by the union of all her members in one faith and communion. 3. That she is always pure and holy in her doctrine and terms of communion, and consequently always free from pernicious errors. 4. That she is catholic, that is, universal, by being the church of all ages, and more or less of all nations. 5. That this church must have in her a succession from the apostles, and a lawful mission derived from them. 6. (Which follows from all the rest) That this true church of Christ cannot be any of the protestant sects, but must be the ancient church communicating with the pope or bishop of Rome*; that this church is infallible in all matters relating to faith, so that she can neither add nor retrench from what Christ taught ‖.

Accordingly we find, the catholic Christian asserts, that God has been pleased, in every age, to work most evident miracles in their church, by the ministry of his saints in raising the dead to life, in curing the blind and the lame, in casting out devils, in healing inveterate diseases in a moment, attested by the most authentic monuments, which will be a standing evidence to all nations, that the church of Rome is the true spouse of Christ †.

† Pope Pius's Creed, Art. IX.

* Ibid. p. 6.

‖ Ibid. p. 12. See these Grounds, &c. answered, in a View of Popery, by the Rev. Mr. Jos. Burroughs, p. 1 to 30.

† See Middleton's Prefatory Discourse, p. 90. See likewise Cardinal Bellarmine's Notes of the True Church, and Dr. Chandler's Answer thereto, in his Two Discourses preached at Salters Hall, and a Collection of Travels, published by Churchill, p. 805.

Art. X. *I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.*

Expos. Baptism is defined by the church of Rome to be a sacrament instituted by our Saviour to wash away original sin, and all those we may have committed—to communicate to mankind the spiritual regeneration and the grace of Christ Jesus, and to unite them to him as the living members to the head §.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, the Catechumen, after they were unclothed, were anointed from the feet to the head with exorcised oil; after this they were conducted to the laver, that they were asked, “If they believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?” That after they had made a profession of this faith, they were plunged three times into the water*.

Those, without all doubt, were judged the most important doctrines of the gospel, in which the Catechumens were required to be instructed before they were received into the church by baptism. This short form was the original creed proposed to the Catechumens, viz. “I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;” which, in the second century, came to be enlarged, in opposition to the Gnostic heresy †.

But since that they have changed both the subject and mode §.

The ceremonies now used in the administration of baptism, according to Durandus, and other approved authors, are, 1. They consecrate the water with prayer, and pouring in of oil at three times. 2. They cross the party on the eyes, ears, nose, and breast. 3. He is exorcised with a certain charm, or exsufflation, or breathing. 4. They put consecrated salt into his mouth. 5. They put spittle into his nose and ears. 6. Add imposition of hands, and the sacerdotal blessing. 7.

§ Aler's Ritual.

* Dupin, vol. II. p. 113.

† D. Bull. Ind. Eccles. Cath. lxiv. f. iii. D. Wall's Hist. of Infant Bapt. p. 69, f. x. See Bereman's Hi. of the Trinitarian Controversy, p. 21.

§ Lawrence of Christian Morals, v. I. p. 193.

They anoint him with holy oil on the breast. 8. And lastly, they anoint him on the crown of the head, using perfume, &c. There was anciently the kiss of peace given him; but that is now left off, together with putting a lighted wax taper into his hand—giving him milk and honey to drink, and cloathing him with a white garment ||.

Art. XI. *I look for the resurrection of the dead.*

Expos. I am fully persuaded of this, as a most evident and infallible truth, that as it is appointed for all men once to die, so it is also determined that all men shall rise from death; that the souls separated from our bodies, are in the hands of God, and live; that the bodies dissolved in dust, or scattered in ashes, shall be re-collected in themselves, and re-united to their souls; that the same flesh which lived before shall be revived, and the same numerical body which did fall shall rise; that this resurrection shall be universal, no man excepted; that the just shall be raised to a resurrection of life, and the unjust to a resurrection of damnation; and that this shall be performed at the last day, when the trumpet shall sound.

Art. XII. *I believe in the life of the world to come.*
Amen.

Expos. I believe that the just, after their resurrection and absolution, shall, as the blessed of the Father, receive the inheritance, and as the servants of God, enter into their Master's joy, freed from all possibility of death, sin, and sorrow, filled with an inconceivable fullness of happiness, confirmed in an absolute security of an eternal enjoyment in the presence of God and of the Lamb for ever and ever†.

|| Roman Ritual.

† Thus far the profession of the catholic faith is conformable to the apostles, or rather to the Nicene creed, and to the general belief of protestants themselves; but the following Profession of the Roman catholic church, as contained in the additional articles of pope Pius's creed, with the expositions thereon, will appear repugnant to the profession of protestants.

Art.

Art. XIII. *I most firmly admit and embrace the apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observations and constitutions of the same church*.*

They affirm that divine truth, which we are all bound to receive, to be partly written, and partly delivered by word of mouth; which is more fully expressed in the preface to the Roman catechism, drawn up by order of the church of Rome, where we find these words towards the conclusion of it—"The whole doctrine to be delivered to the faithful is contained in the word of God, which word of God is distributed into scripture and traditions."

He that receives the faith of the Romish church, not only receives those doctrines in which we agree with them, but the whole doctrine of the church, summarily abridged in the creed of pope Pius IV. in all the points and articles of faith which that church delivers to be believed of all men that desire to be saved, which are to be conceived as one entire body or system of truths, and all assented to, believed, and received, on pain of damnation. Thus Fisher the Jesuit†, "Faith must be entire, whole, and sound in all points; and it is not sufficient steadfastly to believe some points, misbelieving, or not believe others, or any one. For not to believe any one point whatsoever, which God by revealing it doth testify to be true, and which by his church he hath commanded us to believe, must needs be damnable, as being a notable injury to God's verity, and a great disobedience to his will." And Chamelon asserts the same, "All articles (says he) of faith, so determined by the church, are fundamental, none of them may be denied without heresy‡."

Art. XIV. *I do admit the holy scriptures in the same sense that Holy Mother Church doth, whose business it is to*

* Pope Pius's creed, art. xiii.

§. Romish Catechism.

† Cap. iv. in his Treatise of Faith.

‡ Concilium Reditus, p. 20.

judge of the true sense and interpretation of them, and I will interpret them according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.*

The council of Trent decreed that the scripture alone is not a rule of faith without tradition, and traditions are to be received with the like regard and veneration as the scriptures ||.

The author of the profession of catholic faith, on the article of scripture and tradition, asks,

Q. What do you believe concerning the scriptures ?

A. That they are to be received by all Christians as the infallible word of God.

Q. Do you look upon the scriptures to be clear and plain in all points necessary to salvation ? A. No.

Q. How then is the danger to be avoided ?

A. By taking the meaning and interpretation of the scripture from the church, and by apostolical and ecclesiastical tradition.

Q. What do you mean by apostolical tradition ?

A. All such points of faith or church-discipline which were taught or established by the apostles.

Q. What difference is there between apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions ?

A. *Apostolical* traditions are those which had their origin or institution from the apostles, such as infant-baptism, the Lord's day, (or first day of the week) receiving the sacrament, fasting, &c. *Ecclesiastical* traditions are such as received their institution from the church, such as holidays, feasts, and fasts.

Q. How are we to know what traditions are apostolical, and what not ?

A. In the same manner, and by the same authority, by which we know what scriptures are apostolical, and what not ; that is, by the authority of the apostolical church, guided by the unerring spirit of God.

Q. But why should not the scripture alone be the rule of our faith, without having recourse to apostolical traditions ?

* Pope Pius's Creed, art. xiv.

|| Con. Trident. sess. iv.

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A. First, Because without the help of apostolical traditions we cannot so much as tell what is scripture, and what not. Second, Because infant-baptism, and several other necessary articles, are either not at all contained in scripture, or at least are not plain in the scripture without the help of tradition.

For Christ has left his church, and her pastors and teachers, to be our guides in all controversies relating to religion, and consequently of holy writ †.

Thus from the tenor of this article it appears, that the holy scripture in general is accounted so obscure, even in things of the greatest importance, that the common people must by no means be allowed to take their own sense of it, but must have recourse to the interpretation of the church.

Art. XV. I do profess and believe that there are seven sacraments, truly and properly so called, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all of them to every one, viz. baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony; and that they do confer grace; and that of these baptism, confirmation, and orders, cannot be repeated without sacrilege. — I also receive and admit the received and approved rites of the catholic church, in her solemn administration of all the aforesaid sacraments.

A sacrament is an institution of Christ, consisting in some outward sign or ceremony, by which grace is given to the soul of the worthy receiver*.

Baptism is a sacrament instituted by Christ, according to his commission, and from the belief and practice of the church of Christ in all ages, and of the apostles themselves, who administered baptism in water †.

Confirmation is a sacrament wherein by the invocation of the Holy Ghost, and the imposition of the

* Profession of Catholic Faith, p. 15, 16, and 17.

† Ibid. p. 19.

‡ See the Xth Article of this Creed. Also, Profession of Catholic Faith, p. 20.

bishops hands, with the unction of holy chrism, a person receives the grace of the Holy Ghost, and a strength in order to the professing of his faith †.

In this sacrament the church of Rome use oil, olive, and balm; the oil to signify the clearness of a good conscience, and the balm as the savour of a good reputation; and use this form: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost". For which they quote tradition ||.

Confirmation is that which makes us perfect Christians, and impresses an indelible character after baptism, and imparts to us the spirit of fortitude, whereby we are enabled to profess Christianity even at the hazard of our lives; and is therefore deemed a sacrament by the church*.

The sacrament of the *Lord's supper*, or the *Eucharist*. "Eucharist ‡ is a word, says Calmet, particularly set apart in the catholic church, to signify that sacrament which really and in truth contains the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine, consecrated at the sacrifice of the mass. It is called eucharist, because Jesus Christ, in the institution of this divine sacrament, gave thanks to God, broke the bread, and blessed the-cup; *Eucharistia* in Greek signifying thanksgivings, and answers to the Hebrew *Barach*, to bless, or *Hodab*, to praise †.

Penance or infliction, the act of using or submitting to punishment, public or private, as an expression of repentance for sin, is deemed one of the seven sacra-

† Profession of Catholic Faith, p. 20.

|| Bishop Burnet's Exposition of the XXXIX Articles, p. 336.

* Calmet's Dict. Article of Confirmation.

‡ The word *Eucharist* is not, as our author says, peculiar to the Roman catholic church, but his explanation of it is, and the eucharist, as he interprets it, one of the capital and gross errors of that church. There is more truth in the reason alledged by him, for denominating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by this term eucharist. Strange! so absurd a doctrine as that of transubstantiation, should be seriously asserted by men of understanding.

† Article Eucharist.

ments: — it includes confession of sins to the priest, which, if it be accompanied with any degree of contrition, does, upon absolution received from the priest, put them into a state of salvation, though they have lived the most lewd and debauched lives *.

Q. When the question is asked in the Grounds, &c. What do you mean by the sacrament of penance?

A. The answer is, Confession of sins with a sincere repentance, and the priest's absolution †.

The council of Trent not only ascribes to priests the character of presidents and judges for remitting or reclaiming of sins, Session xiv. cap. v. and speaks of the penitents in confession, as brought before a tribunal, that by the penitence of the priest they might be delivered from their sins, cap. vi. but, in the ninth canon of the same session, pronounces an anathema on any who deny that the sacramental absolution of the priest is a judicial act.

The papists define penance to be, "A sacrament consisting in some outward sign or ceremony, by which grace is given to the soul of the worthy receiver, instituted by Christ when, breathing upon the disciples, he gave them the Holy Ghost to remit and retain sins; that is, to reconcile the faithful fallen into sin after baptism: it differeth from baptism not only in matter and form, but also, because the minister of baptism is not a judge in that ordinance; whereas after baptism the sinner presents himself before the tribunal of the priest as guilty, to be set at liberty by his sentence: — it is, however, as necessary as baptism: the form consists in the words, "I do absolve thee." Contrition, confession, and satisfaction, are parts of penance, and the effect of it is reconciliation with God. — Contrition is grief of mind for sins committed with purpose to sin no more, and was ever necessary at all times, but especially in such as sin after baptism: it is a preparation

* Bishop Tillotson's *Danger of Salvation in the Church of Rome.*

† *Grounds of the Catholic Faith*, p. 21.

to remission of sins: — and by penance the church hath ever understood that Christ hath instituted the entire confession of sins, as necessary, by the law of God, to those who fall after baptism: for, having instituted the priests his vicars for judges of all mortal sins, it is certain, that they cannot exercise this judgement without knowledge of the cause. — But, when this is done, the priest, who hath authority, delegate or ordinary, over the penitent, remits his sins by a judicial act; and the greater priests reserve to themselves the pardon of some faults more grievous, as does the pope; and there is no doubt, but that every bishop may do this in his diocese; and this reservation is of force before God. — And in the hour of death any priest may absolve any penitent from any sin. Satisfaction imposed by the priests — What these are, are too well known to need description †.

Extreme unction is a sacrament, and to be administered when persons are in imminent danger, and last of all to be applied *.

Q. What do you mean by extreme unction?

A. You have the full description of it in James v. 14, 15. *Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders (the priests) of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him §.*

Orders. If any one shall say, that orders or holy ordination is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, or that it is a human contrivance invented by men, who were ignorant of ecclesiastical affairs, or that it is only a particular rite of choosing ministers of the word of God, and of sacra-

† See Council of Trent, Session. xiv. and a Profession of Catholic Faith, Printed in 1734. also Dr. Hunt on Penance and Pilgrimages, p. 21.

* Trident. session. xiv. c. xiii.

§ Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 23.

ments, let him be anathema || ; --- or that the Holy Ghost is not given by holy ordination, let him be anathema || ||.

Orders, says the author of the profession of the catholic faith, is a sacrament instituted by Christ, by which bishops, priests, &c. are consecrated to their respective functions, and receive grace to discharge them well.

Matrimony. If any man says that this is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments, instituted by Jesus Christ, but that it is an institution only of the church, and does not confer grace, let him be anathema *.

And if any man says, a churchman in holy orders may marry or contract marriage, and that when it is contracted it is good and valid, notwithstanding any ecclesiastical law to the contrary, or that any who have vowed continence may contract marriage, let him be anathema †.

This was first instituted by God Almighty in Paradise between our first parents, and this institution was confirmed by Christ in the new law, Matt. xix. 4, 5, 6. where he concludes, *What God hath joined together let no man put asunder* §.

Art. XVI. *I embrace and receive every thing that hath been defined and declared by the holy council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification* * *.

Good works do truly deserve eternal life, and whoever holds the contrary is accursed † †.

The council of Trent declares that all of the human kind have lost their holiness and righteousness by the sin of Adam, session v. section 2. making an exception for the Virgin Mary.

|| Dupin's Hist. of the Council of Trent, Session xxiii. Canon iii.

|| Ibid. Canon iv.

* Session xxiv. Canon i.

† Canon ix.

§ Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 23.

* * Pope Pius's Creed, Article XVI.

† † Trid. Session vi. c. xvi. Canon xxxii.

“ That eternal life ought to be proposed to the children of God, both as a grace mercifully promised, and as a reward faithfully bestowed on them for their good works and merits *.”

“ That the good works of a justified person are not so the gifts of God, that they are not also the merits of the justified person; and that he being justified by the good works performed by him through the grace of God and merits of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does truly merit increase of grace and eternal life †. A learned prelate observes they speak so uncertainly of this matter, as evidently shews, they either knew not themselves what they would establish, or were unwilling others should know it ‥.”

Dr. Allix, one of their champions, tells us, “ that *Vega*, who wrote his books of justification during the time he was at the council, maintains that the council by truly meriting did understand meriting *de Condigno* §.

And Maldenate the Jesuit, also, asserts, that we do as truly and properly, when we do well through God’s grace, merit rewards, as we do deserve punishment when we do ill * *.

Cardinal Bellarmine expressly asserts, that our good works do merit, *ex Condigno*, eternal life, and not only by reason of God’s covenant, but also by reason of the work itself † †.

But Bossuet, on the doctrine of merit, observes, that the church professes her hope of salvation to be founded in Christ alone. “ We openly declare, says he, that we cannot be acceptable to God but in and through Jesus Christ; nor do we apprehend how any other sense can be imputed to our belief, of which our daily petition

* Bossuet’s Exposition of the Catholic Catechism.

† Session vi. Canon xxxii.

‥ Archbishop Wake.

§ See the Index Expurgatorius, published in 1584.

* * Clarkson’s Morning Exercise, p. 407.

† † Bellarmine de Just, lib. v. cap. xvii.

to God for pardon, through his grace, in the name of Jesus Christ, may serve as a proof || ||

Art. XVII. *I do also profess, that in the mass there is offered unto God, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead; and that, in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is a conversion made of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion the whole Catholic church call Transubstantiation.*

Thus Bellarmine asserts, "that the celebration of the passover was an express figure of the eucharist; but the passover was a sacrifice; therefore the eucharist must be so too.—That if Christ be a priest for ever, the rite of sacrificing must continue for ever. But there can be no sacrifice, if we destroy that of the mass*.

Therefore N. C. says, that the whole substance of the bread and wine, after consecration, is changed into the body and blood of Christ, without any alteration in the accidents or outward forms. He adds, The words on which transubstantiation is founded, are these, *This is my body, which is given for you*, Luke xxii. 19. Now that these words are to be taken in a literal sense, nothing can be more plain, both from Christ's promise of giving his body, and from St. Paul's words, 1 Cor. x. 16. and 1 Cor. xi. 27.

This sacrifice was only ordained as a representation of that, which was once accomplished on the cross, to perpetuate the memory of it for ever, and to apply unto us the salutary virtue of it for the absolution of those sins, which we daily commit †.

If we ask the author of the Catholic Christian Instructed, How can the accidents of bread and wine

|| || Picart, vol. i. p. 260, where the quotations are larger.

* Bellarmine de Missa, l. i. c. 7.

† Modest and True Account of the chief Points in Controversy, p. 108. See Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 42.

remain without the substance, or the whole body and blood of Christ, be contained in so small a space as that of the host, nay even in the smallest sensible particle of it? or the body of Christ be both in heaven, and at the same time in so many places upon earth? He will say, By the almighty power of God, which is incomprehensible as himself; the immense depth of which cannot be fathomed by the short line and plummet of human reason †.

The catholic christian urges, in support of this doctrine, that our church catechism, in answer to the question, What is the inward part or thing signified? says, The body and blood of Christ, which is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper §.

And the council of Trent, effectually to extirpate all heresies and heretics out of the church relating to this point, declares*, that, if any one says, that a true and proper sacrifice is not offered up to God at the mass, or that to be offered is any thing else than Jesus Christ given to be eaten, let him be anathema.

Canon III. If any one says, that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare memorial of the sacrifice, which was completed upon the cross, and that it is not propitiatory nor profitable to any but him that receives it, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and for the dead, for their sins, their punishments, their satisfactions, and their other necessities, let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If any one says, that the usage of the church of Rome, to pronounce part of the canon, and the words of consecration, with a low voice, ought to be condemned; or that the mass ought only to be celebrated in the vulgar tongue; and that water ought not to be mixed with the wine, which is to be offered in the cup; because it is against the institution of Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.

† Andrews on Transubstantiation, p. 85. who cites Cath. Christian.

§ Preface to the Catholic Christian.

* Sess. 22, Can. 1.

These definitions of faith were followed with a decree to enforce them †.

When it is asked in the catechism, What is the catholic doctrine as to the mass? It is answered, The consecration and oblation of the body and blood of Christ, under the sacramental veils or appearances of bread and wine, wherein is offered a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead ‡.

The church of Rome declare, that, upon the priest's pronouncing these words, *Hoc est corpus meum*, the bread and wine in the eucharist are transubstantiated into the natural body and blood of Christ, the species or accidents only of the bread and wine remaining, and have made it an article to be believed under an anathema *.

Cornelius a Lapide tells us, it was the opinion of some of their grave divines, that this change is made after so powerful and effectual a manner, that, if Christ had not been incarnated before, the force of this charm would have incarnated him, and clothed him with human nature.

That in the sacrifice of the mass, Christ is offered as often as that is celebrated; and that, though therein he be unbloodily offered, yet it is a true propitiatory sacrifice for the sins both of the living and dead, and denounces the person accursed that denies any part of this †.

Solitary masses, wherein the priest communicates alone, are approved and commended, and whosoever saith they are unlawful, and ought to be abrogated, is accursed ‖.

Art. XVIII. *And I believe, that under one kind only, whole and entire, Christ is taken and received.*

† Dupin's Eccles. Hist. of the Sixteenth Century, b. iv. ch. xviii.

‡ Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, p. 31.

* Concil Trident, Sess. 13 de Real. Prof.

† Council Trident. Sess. 22, cap. 1.

‖ Ibid. can. viii. See Discourses of Transubstantiation, 1685; and another of the Real Presence, printed at Oxford, 1687.

Bread and wine, after consecration, are turned into the substance of Christ's body and blood, without changing the species.—And the people are forbidden to receive the sacrament in both kinds *.

The council of Constance decreed, that Christ did institute this sacrament in both kinds, and that the faithful in the primitive church did receive in both kinds: yet, that the practice of receiving in one kind was highly reasonable, they appointed the continuance of consecration in both kinds, and of giving to the laity only in one kind, since Christ was entire, and truly under one kind †. And they assigned these further reasons; lest the blood of Christ should be spilt—lest the wine kept for the sick should fret—lest wine may not always be had—or lest some may not be able to bear the smell or taste.

One would think, says a judicious author, that the church of Rome with-held the cup from the people, merely to shew their authority and power ‡, in dispensing with, or rather in opposing directly, the laws of her professed Lord and Master. Let their own words testify for them§: “In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Amen. This present sacred, general council—declares, decrees, and determines, that although Christ instituted and administered to his disciples this venerable sacrament after supper, under both kinds of bread and wine, yet this, notwithstanding the laudable authority of sacred canons, and the approved custom of the church, hath maintained, and doth maintain, that such a sacrament as this ought not to be made after supper, nor to be received by the faithful otherwise than fasting, excepting in case of infirmity, or other necessity granted or admitted by law, or by the church: and since, for avoiding some dangers and scandals, the custom has been

* Conc. Trident. Sess. 13.

† Conc. Constance, Sess. 13, held A. D. 1414.

‡ Rev. Mr. Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 77.

§ Conc. Constant. apud M. l'Abbe, tom. xii. p. 100.

rationaly introduced, that tho' this sacrament was in the primitive church received by the faithful under both kinds, and afterwards by the makers of it under both kinds, and by the laity only under the species of bread — such a custom as this ought to be accounted a law, which must not be rejected, or at pleasure changed, without the authority of the church. They who assert the contrary are to be driven away as heretics, and severely punished by the diocesans of the places, or their officials, or by the inquisitors of heretical pravity."

The council of Florence has the following paragraph, in relation both to this and the eucharist: "The priest, speaking in the name of Christ, maketh this sacrament; for, by virtue of the very words themselves, the bread is changed into the body of Christ, and the substance of the wine into his blood: yet so that whole Christ is contained under the species of bread, and whole under the species of wine; also in every part of the consecrated host and consecrated wine; when a separation is made, there is whole Christ ||.

Art. XIX. *I do firmly believe, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls kept prisoners there do receive help by the suffrage of the faithful*.—That the souls of the patriarchs and holy men, who departed this life before the crucifixion of Christ, were kept as in prison, in an apartment of hell, without pain.—That Christ did really go into local hell, and delivered the captive souls out of this confinement†.—The fathers assert, that our Saviour descended into hell, went thither specially, and delivered the souls of the fathers out of that mansion§.*

"Bellarmine says there is a purgatory after this life, where the souls of those that are not purged, nor have satisfied for their sins here, are to be purged, and

|| L'Abbe Council. tom. xiii. p. 537.

* Pope Pius's Creed, art. xx.

† Bellarmine de Christo, lib. iv. cap. 11, 12.

§. Rhem. Annot. on Luke xvi. s. 7.

give satisfaction, unless their time be shortened by the prayers, alms, and masses of the living‡.

The council of Trent say, that souls who die in a state of grace, but are not sufficiently purged from their sins, go first into purgatory, a place of torment, bordering near upon hell, from which their deliverance may be expedited by the suffrages; that is, prayers, alms, and masses, said and done by the faithful†.

That souls are to continue in purgatory till they have made full satisfaction for their sins, and are thoroughly purged from them; and that whoever says that there is no debt of temporal punishment to be paid, either in this world or in purgatory, before they can be received into heaven; is accursed§.

In fine, the catholic church being instructed by the Holy Ghost, having always taught, pursuant to the holy scriptures and the ancient tradition of the fathers, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there detained are comforted by the suffrages of the faithful, especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar. The holy council commandeth bishops to take particular care that the faith and belief of the faithful, concerning purgatory, conformable to the holy doctrine handed down to us by holy fathers and holy councils, be believed and every where so taught and preached‡.

And if any shall say,

Art. XX. I do believe that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be worshipped and prayed unto, and that they do offer prayers unto God for us, and that their reliqs are to be had in veneration.*

(I do not, I would not, charge the papists with believing angels or saints to be their redeemers, nor do I imagine that they pray to them as such.)

‡ Trident. sess. xxv.

† Bellarmine de Purgat. lib. ii. c. vii.

§ Concil. Trident, sess. vi. can. xxx.

‡ The decree of the council at the opening the 25th sess. See Earl's Sermon, Salters Hall.

* Pope Pius's Creed, article XX.

But every catholic is taught that angels are to be worshipped and invoked, because they are always in the presence of God, and most willingly take upon themselves the defence of our safety, which is committed to them †. They are taught that in honouring saints who sleep in the Lord, in invoking them, in reverencing their sacred relics and ashes, the glory of God is so far from being lessened that it is greatly increased ‡; that they are to be worshipped and invoked, because they constantly pray to God for the salvation of men §.

In the church of Rome they pray to saints and angels as their intercessors §.

The church of Rome says, that angels and saints are to be worshipped and prayed unto, though with an inferior kind of worship than is paid to God ||.

That it is good and profitable to pray to saints and angels § §.

The church of Rome requires that due worship and veneration be given to them, such as kissing, uncovering the head, and falling down before them, and denounces a curse against those who think otherwise † †.

In answer to this question **, What is the catholic doctrine touching the veneration and invocation of saints?

The answer is, We are taught, 1st, That there is an honour and veneration due to the angels and saints; 2d, That they offer prayers to God for us; 3d, That it is good and profitable to invoke them, that is, to have recourse to their intercession and prayers; 4th, That their relics are to be had in veneration.

† Catechism ad Paroch. sect. xix.

‡ Sect. xx.

|| Sect. xxiv.

§ Trident. session xxv. Catechism. Rom. par. iv. c. ix.

|| Catechism Rom. par. iii. c. ii. p. 89.

§ § Council of Trident. session xxv. de Invocat.

† † Ibid. and Catechism Rom. par. iii. c. ii. p. 24.

** Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, p. 37, 38.

When the reason of it is asked, the answer is, Because the church, in all ages, has paid this honour and veneration to the saints, by erecting churches and keeping holidays in their memory: a practice which the English protestants have also retained.

The church, says Bossuet, in his Exposition on the Creed, in telling of us, that it is beneficial to pray to the saints, teaches us to pray to them in that spirit of charity, and according to that order of brotherly love, which inclines us to request the assistance of our brethren living upon earth; and the catechism of the council of Trent teaches us to beg of them to be our advocates, only using this phrase, *Pray for us*. And in vindication of this their sentiment and practice they alledge, that the church of England still retains this collect upon the day of St. Michael and All Angels: "O! everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the service of angels in a wonderful order, mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth *."

Art. XXI. *I do firmly believe that the images of Christ, of the blessed Virgin, the mother of God, and of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration ought to be paid unto them §.*

The minister shall teach the people, that images of saints are to be placed in churches, that they may be likewise worshipped †. If any doubt arises about the meaning of the word Worship, when applied to images, he, the minister, shall teach them, that images were made to instruct them in the history of both Testaments, and to refresh their memories; for being excited by the remembrance of divine things, they excite more strongly to worship God himself §.

It must be owned, that the papists contend, that images are not to be worshipped as God; and that you

* Plain and Rational Account of the Catholic Faith, p. 48.

§ Pope Pius's Creed, art. xxi. †

† Cat. ad Paroch. part iii. sect. 4. § Ibid.

are, not to imagine there is divinity in them. The honour, or worship, they say, is to be referred to the prototype; and with respect to the virgin Mary, they are not charged with worshipping her, or putting their trust in her, as much as in God, but, strictly speaking, with paying her divine worship. The breviaries are full of examples of such honours paid to her. In the little office of the blessed Mary, she is desired to loose the bonds of the guilty—drive away evils from us—demand all good things for us—make us chaste—protect us from the enemy—receive us at the hour of death. She is set forth in the express language of their liturgies, missals, and breviaries at Rome, as the mother of mercy, hope of the world, and the only trust of sinners; and the saints addressed under the title of intercessors, protectors, and dispensers of grace.

Bishop Stillingfleet says, the council of Nice defined true and real worship to be given to images, i. e. that images were not only to be signs and helps to memory, to call to mind, and represent to us, the object of worship, but that the acts of worship were to be paid to the images themselves. The former use of images doth suppose them to be only of the nature of books, which represent things to our minds, without any act of adoration performed to that, which is only an instrument of intellection, although the thing represented to the mind be a proper object of adoration*. But those who go no farther stand condemned and anathematized by the second council of Nice. For images are not only to be placed in temples, but also to be worshipped as if the persons represented thereby were present†.

All the devotion paid to their saints extends no farther than to desire their prayers, and that the pictures and images of them, which we see in their

* Bishop Stillingfleet's Discourse of Idolatry, p. 575.

† Trident. Sess. xxv. Catech. Rom. Par. iv. c. vi. p. 4.

churches,

churches, are no more than mere memorials, designed to express the esteem which they retain for the persons so represented, or as helps to raise their affections to heavenly things, and that every child amongst them knows this to be true §.

Art. XXII. *I do affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is very beneficial to Christian people* ||.

The council of Trent proposes nothing more relative to indulgences, according to Mons. Bossuet; but that the church had the power of granting them from Jesus Christ, and that the practice of them is wholesome; which custom, that council adds, ought still to be preserved, though with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by too great a toleration.

By indulgences granted by the popes and prelates of the church, persons are discharged from temporal punishment here and in purgatory*.

The dispensing power of indulgences extends not only to the worst crimes, but the priests have power according as they please to grant indulgence for any time, and to give absolution according to their own pleasure. Thus in an indulgence granted by Clement VI. in the year 1351, to the king and queen of France, and their successors, which we shall produce in the pope's own words, transcribed from *D'Achery's Spicilegium*; the English translation of which is as follows §.

“ CLEMENT, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our most dear children in Christ, John and Joan, the illustrious king and queen of France, greet-

§ See Mr. Hugh's Serm. Salters Hall, on the Veneration of Saints and Images.

|| Pope Pius's Creed, art. xxii.

* Trident Sess. xxv. Bull, p. ii. 4.

§ See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 157.

ing, and apostolical benediction: Your design we readily agree to, those especially by which ye may obtain from a propitious God, as ye piously request, peace and health of soul: hence it is, that we, inclining to your supplications, do, by apostolical authority, by the tenor of these presents, for ever, indulge to you, and your successors, who for the time being shall be kings and queens of France, and to every of you, and them, that such confessor, religious or secular, as any of you or them shall think fit to chuse, may commute for you and them, such vows as perhaps you may have made already, or which by you and your successors may be hereafter made, (the ultramarine vow, and that of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and that of chastity and continency, only excepted), and also such oaths by you taken, or by you and them hereafter to be taken, as you and they cannot commodiously keep, into other works of piety; according as he shall see expedient, for the health of your and their souls, and agreeable to God. Be it therefore utterly unlawful for any man whatever, to infringe this our grant, or by a rash adventure, to proceed in opposition to it; but if any shall presume to attempt this, let him know, that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his blessed apostles, Peter and Paul.

“ Given at Avignon, the 19th of April, in our ninth year.”

Art. XXIII. *I do acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman church to be the mother and mistress of all churches; and I do promise and swear true obedience to the bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ*.*

Q. *Proposed* †. What is the catholic doctrine as to the pope's supremacy.

* Pope Pius's Creed, Art. XXIII.

† The Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 51, 52. Compare this with the history of the church in the 17th century.

A. I. That St. Peter was head of the church under Christ.

II. That the pope, or bishop of Rome, is at present head of the church, and Christ's vicar upon earth.

Q. How do you prove these propositions?

A. By the unanimous consent of the fathers, and the tradition of the church, the bishops of Rome are the successors of St. Peter, who translated his chair from Antioch to Rome, and died bishop of Rome. Hence the see of Rome, in all ages, is called the see of Peter, the chair of Peter, and absolutely the see apostolic; and in that quality has, from the beginning, exercised jurisdiction over all other churches, as appears from the best records of ancient church history.

Q. Why do you call the Romish church the mother and mistress of all churches?

A. Because her bishop is St. Peter's successor, and Christ's vicar upon earth, and consequently the father and pastor of all the faithful; and therefore this church, as being St. Peter's see, is the mother and mistress of all churches.

Under this explanation we find the belief of it declared to be necessary to salvation. So says the conclusion of this creed, confirmed by pope Pius V. And to the same purpose, Boniface VIII. in his canon law, asserts and decrees; "Moreover we declare, and say, and define, and pronounce to every human creature, that it is altogether necessary to salvation, to be subject to the Roman pontiff*."

Though it is not immediately under my notice to examine the real merit of transubstantiation, I shall conclude this article with the mention of one argument, urged by the catholic Christians for it, which, if it has any force, must be allowed indeed to be conclusive. "That the unerring authority of the church has declared it to be true, and enjoined the belief of it, (and

* Lib. i. tit. 8. cap. i.

after such a decision) that it is the part of an infidel, rather than a Christian, to ask, how can this be †?" This implicit faith to the authority of the church, our author declares to be the indispensable duty of every Christian.

Art. XXIV. *I do undoubtedly receive and profess all others things that have been delivered, defined, by the sacred canons and oecumenical councils, and especially by the holy synod of Trent, and all other things contrary hereunto; and all heresies condemned, rejected, and anathematized, by the church, I do likewise condemn, reject, and anathematize.*

This bull (as they call it) bears date on the ides of November 1564, and concludes in the usual manner, with threats of the indignation of God, and of his blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, against all that infringe or oppose it.

And every reader, I suppose, discerns, that this is not merely a confession of faith, but likewise a solemn oath; and so the title of it bears, *A bull concerning the form of an oath of profession of faith*; which faith all ecclesiastical persons, whether secular or regular, as they distinguish them, and all military orders, are obliged to take—As follows: "This true catholic faith, without which no one can be saved, which at this present time I do, of my own accord, profess, and sincerely hold, I, the same N. N. do promise and vow, and swear, God assisting me, most constantly to retain and confess, entire and unviolated, to the last breath of my life, and so far as in me lies. I will likewise take care, that it shall be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or those the care of whom belongs to me, in the discharge of my office."—And it is easy to observe, that this is perfectly new, both as an oath and as a profession of faith, never was there any such creed imposed before, or so much as framed, much less tied upon men by an oath. For when these fathers met at Trent, and were to make a profession of faith by rehearsing the creed, which the Roman church uses,

so the words are *, they could find none to profess, but the Nicene creed: no larger creed was in use, no, not even in the Roman church; but these very men, who afterwards turned new creed-makers, were forced to be content with that.

Though this creed is asserted to be the true catholic faith, it is in no sense catholic, as to place, nor time; for it was no where used till they made it, no not there, nor is now every where believed, and was not, in the additional articles to the Nicene creed, believed in any church for above 1500 years; nor now used in that church itself, when they admit members into the catholic church by baptism; but they are said to be put into a state of salvation, by their professing to believe the Nicene creed alone: which is a direct contradiction to the terms of this creed, wherein are included the doctrines of transubstantiation, worshipping images, the seven sacraments, traditions, and other constitutions of the Romish church, there declared to be necessary to salvation†.

The council of Constance declares, that they being a general council, lawfully congregated in the Holy Ghost, and representing the catholic church, it has power immediately from Christ, which every one, of whatsoever state, or dignity, even the papal, is obliged to obey in things appertaining to faith, &c. or suffer condign punishment§.

This creed is peculiarly adapted to the genius and spirit of popery, and to the particular views of this council, requiring, *That all things which have been delivered, defined, and declared, by the sacred canons of this synod be received and believed without doubting*; an assent so full and implicit can scarce be complied with by any reasonable agent. But even this believing is not enough; if you do not condemn and anathematize all, that under the character of unbelievers are condemned, and anathematized by the church. And what is the

* Sess. 3.

† Dr. Patrick's (since bishop of Ely) *Pillar and Ground of Faith.*

§ Sess. v.

consequence of that? Why, if he is a heretic, and condemned by the church, he must be treated as an heretic, and subjected to all the punishments which the church decrees should be inflicted on them*. From these doctrines, taught and inculcated by the church of Rome, have streamed forth the impious doctrine of subjects renouncing allegiance to such princes as would not obey the pope, and even of murdering them and all their adherents.

Out of the numerous particulars, which the Romanists profess without doubting to receive, I shall make only one quotation from the great Lateran, holden by pope Innocent III. in the year 1215. It is made a part of the canon law †, and according to the literal translation of it into English is as follows :

“ We excommunicate, anathematize, all heresy, which lifts up itself against this holy, orthodox, and catholic faith, which we have set forth, condemning all heretics, by what names soever they be reckoned. Let those who are condemned be left to the secular powers in being, or their bailiffs, to be by them punished with due animadversion; they of the clergy being first degraded from their orders; so that the goods of those condemned, if they be of the laity, be confiscated; if of the clergy, applied to those churches from which they received stipends: as for those who shall be found only marked with the suspicion of heresy, if they do not, according to the consideration of the suspicion, and the quality of the person, prove their own innocency by a suitable purgation, let them be smitten with the sword of anathema, and, till they give a fitting satisfaction, be avoided by all, so that, if they remain a whole year under excommunication, they be from that time condemned as heretics: but let all secular powers, whatever offices they exercise, be admonished and induced, and if need be, let

* See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 135.

† Decret. Gregor. lib. v. tit. vii. cap. xiii. See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 136, 137, 138. See the Article *Persecution*.

them by the censures of the church be compelled, as ever they wish to be accounted faithful, for the defence of the faith, publicly to take an oath, that they will, *bona fide*, according to their power, endeavour to exterminate heretics, marked out by the church, from all the lands subject to their jurisdiction, so that from the time when any one shall be advanced into power, whether perpetual or temporal, he shall be obliged to confirm this matter with an oath: but if the temporal lord, being thereunto by the church required and admonished, shall neglect to purge his territory from this heretical defilement, let him, by the metropolitan and the rest of the bishops of the province, be tied up in the bond of excommunication; and if he disdain to make satisfaction, let this within the year be signified to the pope, that from that time he may denounce his vassals to be absolved from fidelity to him, and expose his country to be occupied by catholics, that they, having exterminated the heretics, may without any contradiction profess it and keep it in the purity of the faith, with a salvo to the right of the principal possessor, provided that he yield no obstacle in this affair, nor set up any impediment: the same law, however, to be observed with regard to such as have principal lords; and as for those catholics, who, taking the badge of the cross, shall set themselves to the rooting out of heretics, they shall be favoured with the same indulgence, and fortified with the same holy privileges, which are granted to those who go to the aid of the Holy-Land *."

There is a variety of things in this decree which deserve our notice. First, that all those in general are condemned as heretics, who venture to oppose what the pope and his council pronounce to be the holy, orthodox, and catholic faith; then that the poor condemned heretics are delivered over to the secular powers to be by them punished with due animadversion; the first act of which is ordered to be a deprivation of all worldly sub-

* Rev. Mr. Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 136. who quotes Decret. Gregor. lib. v. tit. vii. cap. xiii.

stance. All princes are obliged to take a solemn oath that they will exterminate heretics out of their dominions. — The people are likewise by this decree exposed to intolerable slavery before they are delivered over to destruction, by being made subject to anathema when only marked with a suspicion of heresy, and if they do not prove their innocency by what the priest shall account a sufficient purgation, they are to be avoided by all. Thus left at the mercy of the priest, who for want of receiving such satisfaction as he shall judge proper, can direct and oblige the magistrate to deprive them of substance and liberty, and even life itself.

The following judicious reflections on pope Pius's creed, by the Rev. Mr. Burroughs, may not be unacceptable to our readers. "Let any man, who has ever read the New Testament, judge what likeness there is, between the doctrine of pope Pius's creed, and that which was taught by our blessed Lord and his apostles. Nay, let any man of sober thought, whether he has read the scriptures or not, judge whether it is possible, that such a religion should ever come from God, as that which the church of Rome tells you is necessary to salvation."

The doctrine of Christ and his apostles teaches us the highest veneration of the one living and true God, the wise and righteous and gracious governor of the world, and the most ardent affection to him as our best friend and benefactor: and directs and encourages us to seek of him, with a full assurance of faith, every needful blessing, in the name of Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and men. It requires of us righteousness and equity in our whole conduct towards those with whom we have to do; and very particularly recommends a mutual forbearance and affectionate tenderness among Christian brethren, with regard to the misapprehensions and mistakes into which they may fall. And, as any religion must do which comes from God, it lays a very great stress upon a sober, temperate course
of

of life; excluding from the kingdom of heaven those who allow themselves in the contrary course.

But in the preceding papers we have seen, that the religion of the church of Rome opposes that of our Lord Jesus Christ in all these respects, though it pretends in every one of them to adhere to it. The papists profess indeed to acknowledge one only living and true God: yet at the same time it is notorious, that they pay more real worship and adoration to angels and saints, and even to images, than to him. And to keep up this practice, such thoughts are suggested to the people's minds concerning the divine being, as are altogether unworthy of him, and inconsistent with the honour of the one and only mediator, in whose name we are directed to address him. Nay, the multiplicity of the prayers themselves, which are addressed to saints and angels, begging for their intercession, tends to make the people think concerning the kindest and most benevolent being in the world, that he is almost inexorable, and that nothing but continual importunity will prevail with him for any favour: whereas the mediation of Christ, as stated in the New Testament, teaches no such thing; but encourages us, sinners as we are, to go directly to God in *his* name, *in whom* he has declared himself to be *well pleased*. But this one mediator is by the church of Rome overlooked, in a croud of others of her own making.

Then, instead of a strict regard to righteousness, and sobriety, the doctrines of indulgences and purgatory, and so likewise that of absolution, upon confession and satisfaction at the will and pleasure of the priest, encourage all manner of vice and wickedness: since, according to these doctrines, a man may buy off any punishment, if he survives the wicked actions he resolves upon; or, at the worst, can have them bought off when he is dead, if he has but money enough to leave behind him.

As to forbearance and brotherly kindness; the church of Rome is a sworn enemy to these Christian virtues.

She-

She will not bear the least deviation from her own traditions, decrees, and canons. She makes them all *necessary to salvation*, both in this life, and that which is to come; presumptuously denouncing eternal damnation to those who do not punctually observe and obey them; and cruelly destroying such of them as she can get into her own power.

What good pretensions the church of Rome has to be the church of Christ, she shews by setting up another head over the church besides Christ, inconsistently with his legislative authority, and contrary to his own express direction.

How little value she has for the scripture, she shews by setting up her own traditions upon an equal footing with it. And by the same means, and by claiming the sole authority of interpreting scripture, she prevents, as much as in her lies, its being of any use to the people, even when they can get a sight of their Bibles, which for the most part is forbidden. She will not suffer them to exercise their reason in judging of that revelation, which she tells them God has given for their direction. No: if you will be a true member of this church, you must give up your reason, and even the testimony of your senses too; as appears notoriously in the affair of transubstantiation. And yet it is evident, that our blessed Lord himself frequently appealed to the judgement and conscience of his hearers, concerning the goodness and divine original of his doctrine; and always to their senses, as often as he wrought any miracles.

How destructive to all the views of true religion is the stress which popery lays upon external services, to the neglect of what is inward and pertaining to the conscience; and how fatally this tends to harden men in their sins, and to make them resolve against the irksome work of subduing ill habits, and labouring after those which are truly good; is too visible to need a demonstration.

How absolutely this corrupt church is resolved upon maintaining a dominion over mens consciences, and
what

what cruel measures she takes for that purpose, has been sufficiently shewn. How contrary this domineering and cruel spirit is to the humble and peaceful spirit of Christianity, needs no proof, to those who have any acquaintance with the books of the New Testament. And how inconsistent it is with the peace of civil government, and even with the safety of those, whether governors or people, who refuse to put themselves entirely into the priests power; is not only evident in the nature of the thing, but notorious from history, in all those cases where the priests have thought it worth their while to try their strength†.

It is farther necessary to observe, that as the Roman catholics are sensible how justly these articles in their plain and obvious sense are objected to, and censured by protestants, with the expositions and confirmations of them by councils, &c. they have endeavoured to evade their literal sense, and to give a more plausible and ambiguous form of expression in their room. The most remarkable piece of this kind is entitled, "A Vindication of the Roman Catholics," being a most solemn declaration of their utter abhorrence of the following tenets, vulgarly laid at their door, printed at London at the beginning of king James's reign, and reprinted in 1743, when an invasion was designed against England by the pretender. It was calculated to introduce popery, by making it appear, that popery was not that horrid antichristian thing, but in its own nature mild and gentle, and as fair as truth itself. The author, and the present editor, say, that if the ensuing curses be added to those appointed to be read on the first day of Lent, "they will seriously and heartily answer *Amen* to them all."

I. *Cursed is he that commits idolatry, that prays to images or relics, or worships them for gods.*

Resp. *Amen.*

Notwithstanding the readiness of the Roman catholics to oblige themselves to answer *Amen* to this curse, yet it may be worth enquiring how far they are guilty

† Rev. Mr. Burrough's View of Popery, p. 143, 144, 145, 146.
of

of this crime. Idolatry consists in the acknowledgement of authority and dominion in some invifible being or beings over us, which they have not. If this be attributed to fainted and angels, it is idolatry.

II. *Cursed is every goddeſs worſhipper, that believes the Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature; that honours her, worſhips her, or puts his truſt in her as much as in God; that believes her above her Son, or that ſhe can in any thing command him.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

You are not charged with believing the Virgin Mary to be more than a creature, nor with worſhipping her, or putting truſt in her, as much as in God, but with worſhipping her. Whether it be more or leſs, or as much as God, is not the point; but whether ſhe ought at all to be worſhipped. The papifts are charged with giving undue honour and worſhip to, and truſt in her; an honour which has not the countenance of one ſingle paſſage in ſcripture, much leſs command to do it.

III. *Cursed is he that believes the angels or ſaints in heaven to be his redeemers, that prays to them as ſuch, or that gives God's honour to them, or to any creature what-ever.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

I do not, I would not, charge the papifts with believing angels or ſaints to be their redeemers, nor do I imagine that they pray to them as ſuch; what they are to be charged with is, praying to ſaints, praying to beings who are ſuppoſed ready and able to help them, without any grounds from revelation, without knowing that they have authority over us, without knowing that they can hear us, without knowing that they are permitted to help us, or intercede for us.

IV. *Cursed is he that worſhips any breadden god, or makes gods of the empty elements of bread and wine.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

In this, as in all the other preceding points, there is an equivocation. May we not word the curſe thus—

Cursed

Curſed is he that worſhips that which before it was conſecrated was bread and wine, and after conſecration ſeems to all our ſenſes to retain the ſubſtance of bread and wine? If this were the caſe, it would be worſhipping a breaden god. What then is the difference between the conſecrated bread, and the ſame bread unconſecrated? You tell us of a change made in the elements by conſecration, and that what before was bread is now Chriſt himſelf.

V. Curſed is he that believes that prieſts can forgive ſins, whether the ſinner repents or no; or that there is any power in earth or heaven that can forgive ſins, without a hearty repentance and ſerious purpoſe of amendment.

Reſp. Amen.

In answer to this I obſerve, that our author ſuppoſes that prieſts can forgive ſins, if the ſinner does repent; he ſuppoſes likewiſe, that the ſinner is a believer in Chriſt, and that the prieſt can forgive ſuch a ſinner if he repents: now a prieſt that pretends to forgive the ſins of a repenting Chriſtian, aſſumes to himſelf a power or privilege which can never be proved to be given to him. Who can forgive ſins but God alone, againſt whom they are committed? If therefore any prieſts aſſume to themſelves a power over Chriſtians to forgive them their ſins, they tranſgreſs the law of Chriſt under the cover of his words, which they pervert to uſes of their own.

VI. Curſed is he that believes that prieſts can give preſent abſolution to any perſons for ſins they may commit in time to come. Reſp. Amen.

“ This curſe, I ſuppoſe, is added by the editor, that it is an article of the catholic faith, to believe that no power on earth can licence men to lye, forſwear, and perjure themſelves, to maſſacre their neighbours, or deſtroy their native country, on pretence of promoting the catholic cauſe or religion.” But this is far from being clear. Suppoſe your neighbour, or thoſe of your native country, to be heretics, what is the catholic faith, or catholic practice, in this caſe? Is it not

expressly declared †, that no prejudice or impediment can or ought to arise to the catholic faith, or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by any acts of kings, that may hinder the ecclesiastical judge to proceed and punish the heretic, if he refuses to retract? and is it not the catholic faith and practice to order|| all princes and states, &c. not to permit known heretics to preach within their districts, to have any lodging or house, to engage in contracts, to use any trade, or to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful in Christ? and if they die, are they not denied Christian burial?*

VII. *Curled is he that believes there is authority in the pope, or any other that can give leave to commit sins, or that can forgive him his sins for a sum of money.*

Resp. *Amen.*

That the pope pretends to forgive something for a sum of money. is not, I think, disowned; that he intends to give leave to commit sins, or that he forgives sins for a sum of money, is here denied. But it will be asked, What is the intent and design of indulgences, plenary indulgences, indulgences for 1000 or 10,000 years? What, are those instruments of indulgence not only to a man's self, but to all his family and relations for three generations inclusive†.

VIII. *Curled is he that believes, that, independent of the merits and passion of Christ, he can merit salvation by his own good works, or make condign satisfaction for the guilt of his sins, or the pains eternal due to them.*

Resp. *Amen.*

If this be so, then there is no surplus of good works in any of the saints; in consequence, no spiritual treasure of the church, no works of supererogation; for, if there were, a man might merit salvation by his own good works, and make condign satisfaction for the guilt of his sins; and then the question is, How far a man may merit salvation?

† Council Constan. sess. xix.

|| Ibid. p. 56.

* Ibid. sess. xx. xxxv.

† See p. 161.

IX. *Cursed is he that contemns the word of God, or hides it from the people, on design to keep them from the knowledge of their duty, and to preserve them in ignorance and error.*

Resp. *Amen.*

This is an evasive account of the papists hiding the scriptures from the people. The question is, Why are the scriptures kept at all from the people? And the answer is, That they do not keep them for this or that particular purpose. It may be so; but you may have other purposes, other ends, other designs, all bad in themselves, at the same time that you profess to hide the scriptures from the people, not on design to keep them in ignorance.

X. *Cursed is he that undervalues the word of God, or that, forsaking scripture, chooses rather to follow human tradition than it.*

Resp. *Amen.*

Admit that the papists do not design to "undervalue the word of God, admit that they do not forsake the scripture, admit too that they do not chuse to follow human traditions rather than it:" yet they may put human traditions upon an equal footing with the scriptures: they may join traditions to scripture, and make both to be equally observed. The council of Trent did this, when it professed to "receive and reverence all the books of both the Old and New Testament, since God is the one author of both, and also traditions, which relate to either faith or manners, as if they were dictated either by word of mouth, by Christ, or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in a constant succession in the catholic church." It received them, I say, with equal affection of piety and reverence: nay, it pronounced an anathema to all who willingly and wittingly contemned traditions." Now, if the scripture alone, and by itself, contains the rule of faith, they who join tradition to it to form the rule of faith, undervalues the word of God as not sufficient of itself to give us the rule of faith; and that equal tradition to the scriptures
undervalue

undervalue the scriptures, because they treat traditions just with the same regard as they do the word of God.

XI. *Cursed is he that leaves the commandments of God to observe the constitutions of men.*

Resp. *Amen.*

Supposing one were to charge the papists, not with absolute leaving the commandments of God to the constitutions of men, but with obliging men to observe the constitutions of men equally with the commandments of God; this would be what they would not discharge themselves from. What are their auricular confession, absolution, penances, but human constitutions, not in the word of God? What is made by their church, and treated with anathemas, excommunications, burnings, tortures, and all the severest penalties that inhuman cruelty could invent, but that is a mere invention of men? But the fact is in many instances they have left the command of God, to observe the constitutions of men.

XII. *Cursed is he that omits any of the Ten Commandments, or keeps the people from the knowledge of any of them, to the end they may not have occasion of discerning the truth.*

Resp. *Amen.*

It is not of any great consequence, I apprehend, how the Ten Commandments are divided, provided every one of them be inculcated, and the people taught their full meaning; but yet the usual division is on many accounts preferable, as the reason for the prohibition of images is distinct from the prohibition of other gods, and the coveting of our neighbour's house, and coveting his wife and goods, are founded upon the same reason. The Jews of old understood the division of the commandments to be as all protestants have made it, and so Josephus has distinguished them in Ant. Jud. l. iii. c. iv. and so has Philo; both of

expressly calling that the *second* commandment which we call so.

XIII. *Cursed is he that preaches to the people in unknown tongues, such as they understand not; or uses other means to keep them in ignorance. R. Amen.*

It should not have been said,—*that preaches to the people in an unknown tongue*; but, *that prays in an unknown tongue in public assemblies*. It is well known, that all their public services are in a tongue which the people do not understand: can this tend to edification? Or if the priest call upon the people to join in certain acts of worship, can the people *understand* what they are called upon for? They are present at the litanies, and other public acts of devotion, which are all performed in *Latin*: can they join in prayer to God, when they know not what is said? Is it to be called *prayer*, when neither the *words*, nor the *sense*, is such as that the petitioner can know what he prays for? He may indeed be devout, and lift up his heart to God, whilst the priest reads something which is not understood. But the apostle has observed, *If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also—Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15, 16. I do not say, that this is done with *design* to, or for this *end*, that they may *keep the people in ignorance*: but it is an *absurd*, a *senseless* piece of management, which can answer no good end.

XIV. *Cursed is he that believes that the Pope can give to any, upon any account whatsoever, dispensations to lie, or swear falsely; or that it is lawful for any at the last hour to protest himself innocent in case he be guilty. R. Amen.*

How far, and to what particular cases the Pope's *dispensing power* may extend, or he himself may apply

it, may be hard to say. It is certain, that application has been made to him to grant *dispensation* to many within degrees prohibited by the *Levitical* law, and he has claimed this power. Now, if he may dispense with one law of God, he may with equal right dispense with another. He has *dispensed* with oaths, nay *absolved* from oaths: and it is an allowed fact, that he has frequently put this in execution. And this power has never been taken away, or given up, that I have heard.

It is added, "*Cursed is he that believes it lawful for any one, at the last hour, to protest himself innocent in case he be guilty.*" Ay, or at any hour. But suppose a man to be absolved by a judicial act of priestly absolution from *guilt*, can he then be deemed *guilty*? If he be cleared *a culpa & reatu*, from fault and guilt, why may he not protest himself innocent? It is true, he cannot do this *if he be guilty*; that is, if he thinks himself not free from *guilt*: but where the judge has in form pronounced a man *innocent*, and declared all *guilt* to be removed, the offender has a right to protest himself *innocent*, and he may be weak enough to believe himself to be so.

XV. *Cursed is he that encourages sins, or teaches men to defer the amendment of their lives, on presumption of a death-bed repentance.* R. Amen.

The point which should be made good by *Papists* is, that their sacraments of *absolution* and *extreme unction* do not naturally tend to encourage sins, and lead men to defer amendment on presumption of their good effects on a death-bed. *Absolution* pronounced in form, as from the ministers of God, and a supposed power in every priest to free every one from all kind of sin, when danger of death appears, cannot but be an encouragement to defer amendment till the last hour.

When *extreme unction* is made a sacrament, and is to be administered on the death-bed, and it is declared to be for these uses, that it gives grace which remits sins, and particularly the lighter ones, commonly called venial;

venial; that it frees the soul from that weakness and languor which it has contracted from sin, and from the remains of sin; that it administers joy and comfort to the souls of the faithful, and supplies them with arms and strength to resist the devil, and to break his force.—When extreme unction has all these good effects; must it not naturally encourage men to go on in vice, and to defer amendment, when they have so good a sheet-anchor at last? It is not knowing mankind, not to see this natural effect. So that though he is pronounced accursed, who encourages, that is, exhorts, advises, or promotes designedly any sin, or that teaches to defer amendment of life on presumption of a death-bed repentance; yet if the ordering and general conduct of things is such as tends naturally to this effect, this may be charged with encouraging, what the natural result of it is; and the debate will be only about the propriety of the word *encourage*, which signifies not only *active exciting*, but not *obstructing* when you see the ill effect of an action.

XVI. *Curfed is he that teaches men that they may be lawfully drunk on a Friday, or on any other fasting-day, though they must not taste the least bit of flesh. R. Amen.*

As I never heard of any body that pretended to teach men that they may be lawfully drunk on any day, I look upon this curse as a mere sally of zeal: it is enough to remark, that the eating any flesh is forbidden *absolutely* by the church; the drinking wine is not so, upon their fasting days. The thing I would recommend to the consideration of all Papists is, their departure from scripture. Why do they command abstinence from *flesh* on so many days in every week? Why abstain from *meats*, which God hath ordained to be received by all with thanksgiving? Why is such a fast enjoined, as may be kept with drinking of *wine*, and other even *stronger liquors*? I do not charge them with allowing excesses in liquors, but with enjoining so many fast and meagre days, on a *spiritual* not *me-*

dicinal account, and this without authority from Christ or his apostles, nay in direct compliance with that mark that is mentioned as a sign of an apostacy from the faith.

XVII. *Cursed is he who places religion in nothing but a pompous shew, consisting ONLY in ceremonies, and which teaches not the people to serve God in spirit and in truth.*

Here again is a sad instance of chicane. Nobody, I believe, charges the Papists with *placing religion* in nothing but *pompous shew*: but they are charged with cumbering religion with numerous rites and ceremonies, with processions, pilgrimages, and all the evils arising from such sorts of follies. The doctrines and practices of the gospel are plain, simple, easy things; which yet have been so loaded, so overburdened with ceremonies, that an apostle of Christ, were he to arise and be brought to the baptism of any person, would not be able to say what they were about. Let us suppose the water consecrated, the person standing at the church-doors forbid to enter into the church, and there catechized. Then exorcism is used to expel the devil, &c.

XVIII. *Cursed is he who loves or promotes cruelty; that teaches people to be bloody-minded, and to lay aside the meekness of Jesus Christ. R. Amen.*

It is right to disclaim cruelty and bloody-mindedness: but if the people are taught, that heretics may be *killed*; if heretics may be delivered over to the secular arm and be burnt; and all are heretics who oppose the rights and privileges of the *Roman church*; if they are represented so odious to God and man, that they may be justly destroyed; if their deserving the flames be so inculcated, that the people who are spectators at an *Auto de Fe*, shall look on the person condemned by the holy inquisition, and see them carried to the flames without emotion, nay with joy, as if they were murderers or robbers, justly condemned, and deserving

deserving the fate they met with :—this is to *promote cruelty, and teaching the people to be bloody-minded.*

XIX. *Cursed is he who teaches that it is lawful to do any wicked thing, though it be for the interest and good of mother church ; or that any evil action may be done that good may come of it.*

What think you of the *lawfulness* of destroying, rooting out *heretics* by fire, imprisonment for life, and such like inhumanities ? Did the *Romish* church ever deem it lawful to keep faith with such, when it could easily avoid it ? Did not your *church* give safe-conduct to *Jerom of Prague*, and yet condemn him and get him burnt ? They denied indeed the validity of the *Emperor's* safe-conduct to *John Hufs*, and because the council did not grant it, it was deemed void. But the council gave it to *Jerom of Prague* ; and yet, because he made a retraction, and repented of his retraction, they found him guilty, and delivered him over to the flames.

XX. *Cursed are we, if, amongst all those wicked principles and damnable doctrines commonly laid at our doors, every one of them be the faith of our church ; and cursed are we, if we do not as heartily detest all those bellish practices, as they that so vehemently urge them against us. R. Amen.*

I have mentioned above, what are the particular tenets which the *Papists* are charged with ; and which this author has not endeavoured to vindicate them from. He may pronounce these curses, and yet be guilty of idolatry, false worship, prayers to saints and angels, trust to priestly absolutions, and indeed offend against some precepts of the gospel, or maintain some very unjustifiable practices, which he may seem to condemn, though he really designs to abet them. When therefore he adds,

XXI. *Cursed are we, if in answering and saying, Amen to any of these curses, we use any equivocation, or*

mental reservations; or do not assent to them in the common and obvious sense of the words. R. Amen.

When, I say, this is added, I cannot but reply—You may say *Amen* to these curses without any equivocation, or mental reservation, and you may assent to them in the obvious sense of the words, and yet you may be guilty of great equivocation in *framing* these causes, and you may design to deceive the ignorant by them. You may say very well and very truly, *curseth is he that believes the Virgin Mary to be more than a creature, or that trusts in her as much as in God*; and yet you may believe in her, worship her, honour her, and pray to her. You may curse them that *believe that priests can forgive sins, whether a sinner repents or not*; and yet you may maintain, that priests act *judicially* in forgiving sins. You may curse him that worships a *breaden* god, that is, believes a wafer to be a god; and yet let consecration be added to the wafer, and then you may think it lawful to worship what your adversaries still see to be bread, though you think it God. The fault therefore lies in the *framing* these curses; in so *wording* them, that ignorant people may be deceived; in concealing the truth of what your doctrines are, at the same time that you make converts to your church and mispersuaded people, and cover that which you dare not openly avow.

Having thus given an account of the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic church, according to the articles of Pope Pius's creed, explained and confirmed by a variety of decrees of council, definitions of *popes*, *cardinals*, and many approved authors; and suggested some suitable inferences from thence, and then introduced their evasive representation of many of their articles, though introduced in the form of an anathema; I shall close this part with the mention of some particular doctrines and practices, taught and defended by them, most repugnant to Protestant principles, and instances of their gross corruption, viz.

I. Of Prayer and Preaching in an unknown Tongue.

The council of Trent decreed, that divine service should not be performed in the mother tongue *.

The church of Rome doth anathematize all those that hold a vulgar tongue necessary to divine service, and doth absolutely forbid their own missal to be so translated, and doth persecute those that have so used it †. Yet Bellarmine acknowledges it was otherwise long after the apostles time.

By this means, says the author of the History of Popery, the common people are deprived of the instruction and comfort of God's word in their public worship.—The prayers and supplications put up to God, are in a language that they know not what is said; and therefore cannot assent with their hearts, nor have such devout affections excited in their souls, as would recommend their prayers to the throne of grace.

Vitalian, in the year 666, was the first who established it, commanding the Latin service generally to be received into the western churches; though at that time, in most parts, few of the people understood it ‡.

II. Of their prohibiting the Use of the Scriptures in the vulgar Tongue, to the Laity.

The scriptures are strictly prohibited to be read in the vulgar tongue without licence from the bishop §. The reason assigned is, that more prejudice than profit will redound from it,

* Sess. 22. cap. 8.

† Bellarmine de Verb. l. ii. cap. 16.

‡ History of Popery, vol. I. p. 166.

§ See Tillotson's Works, vol. I. p. 277.

Bays of the Worship of God in an unknown Tongue.

¶ Reg. Ind. Lib. Prohib. R. 4.

This liberty was thought too much, and therefore the faculty of granting such licence was taken away by the order of Pope Clement VIII *. But when the Papists are charged with refusing the scriptures, they take the confidence to deny it, or endeavour to put such glosses upon it, as to make their denial of the scriptures to the laity a better way of granting them; since they pretend to give the true sense of them, and thereby to deliver them with peculiar advantage †.

In consequence of thus withholding the use of the Bible or scriptures, from the inspection of the people,

I. The church of Rome decrees mens private judgment of discretion, as utterly insufficient to make any certain distinction of truth from falsehood, in matters of religion.

II. She allows no sufficient rule, without the true church (as she styles herself) to guide and direct our private judgment of discretion.

III. She resolves all certainty, as to matters of faith, into the authority of the true church.

IV. She authorises the true church to impose upon us, an absolute necessity of believing such things as before were not necessary to be believed ‡.

But that this is a novel imposition of that church, will appear from a variety of instances of the Popes, and of the fathers, who have asserted the right of all Christians to the use of the Bible, as Pope Gregory, St. Chrysostom, and St. Austin ||.

If the reader desires to know when, and upon what occasion, this liberty was first taken from laymen, I will now tell him. The first synodical prohibition was that of the synod of Tholouse, in the year 1228, in

* Reg. Ind. Lib. prohib. Anct. Sexti. V. & Clem. VIII. obser. circa 4. regul.

† See the Right of the People to read the Scripture, by Dr. Stratford, since Bishop of Chester.

‡ Eighth Note of the Church, considered by Dr. Scott, R. of St. Giles.

|| Hem. 9. in Epist. ad Colof. Expos. Moral. &c.

these

these words : “ We forbid that laymen be permitted to have the books of the Old and New Testament, unless some one out of devotion desire to have the psalter or breviary for divine offices, and the hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary ; but even those now mentioned, they may not have translated in the vulgar tongue *.” The special occasion of this decree, was the preaching of the Waldenses, who taught, that, in articles of faith, the holy scriptures were the rule by which men were to judge ; that whatsoever was not agreeable to the word of God ought to be rejected ; that the reading and knowledge of the scriptures was free and necessary to all men, both laity and clergy. But when the church of Rome had got a variety of new articles of faith as would not abide the old test, it was prudently done to deprive the people of the scriptures, that they might not be able to discover the errors into which they led them †. And it is highly probable, that the like motive occasioned this privilege of reading the scriptures to be limited to licensed persons in the 22d sessions of the council of Trident, and have been since more strictly confirmed by the authority of other councils, and the decrees of Pope Clement VIII. about the year 1592. This was indeed, says another reverend prelate ‡, a great degree of caution, but not a jot more than she stood in need of ; for when she had for a long time performed all her public offices in an unknown tongue, and robbed the laity of half the communion ; when she had introduced a strange worship of relicks and images, and set up to herself many mediators for intercession ; when she had maintained, that Christ was offered every day in the sacrifice of the mass, and taught and

* D'Acherii, tom. II. p. 624.

† Dr. Stratford's Discourse of the People's Right to read the Scriptures.

‡ Dr. Grove, late Bishop of Chichester's Discourse of the Protestant and Popish way of interpreting Scripture.

done many things apparently repugnant to the word of God: then, to secure herself in the possession of these doctrines and practices, it was but necessary she should divest the common people of the scriptures, and claim to herself the sole right of interpreting. This, and nothing but this, could sufficiently guard her against all contradiction; for whatever exposition she gives of any controverted place, none must dare to call it in question, though she may have frequent occasion to frame glosses directly contrary to the express letter of the text. She is got into that impregnable fortress, and will never be forced to yield to the clearest evidence that can be brought, while she is able to make good this unlimited power of understanding every thing in her own sense. No wonder that the Romanist contends with so much zeal, to bear down all with the judgment of the church; and if he can gain this one point, he makes himself master of all the rest. But Protestants will easily see the fallacy of such pretensions, and bear their testimony against such usurped authority.

But there is another artifice made use of, and practised for the sake of evading this charge; which is occasionally producing versions of the scriptures into the mother tongue, or in the modern tongues; wherein they have contrived, by various falsifications, to make them speak the language of their missals and breviaries, in order to sanctify their novel rites by the authority of the apostles, and make the people believe they had been practised from the times even of the gospel. Thus, to countenance the practice of canonizing, or beatifying, or making saints in the church, they have rendered a passage of St. James v. 11. not as it ought to be, Behold how we count them happy or blessed, but Behold how we *beatify* those who have suffered with constancy: and in favour also of their processions, where is said, Heb. xi. 30. That the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had encompassed it about seven days; their version renders it, After a *procession*

cession of seven days around it; and, to give the better colour to their trade of pilgrimages, St. Paul, according to their version, requires it as the qualification of a good widow, that she have lodged *pilgrims*, 1 Tim. v. 10.; and St. John praises Gaius for having dealt faithfully with pilgrims, John iii. 5, &c. See a treatise, intitled *Papery an Enemy to Scripture*, where the learned and ingenious author, Mr. Serces, has given a large collection of these falsifications.

Of Indulgences.

Indulgences are the surest touchstones which his holiness makes use of to try the faith of true believers. A vast number of devotees imagine that they infallibly secure the attainment of paradise. The origin of these means, this salutary institution, which has since degenerated into an abuse, seems particularly hinted at in a passage of St. Cyprian: but be that as it will, the release from torments was not known till a long time after by the name of indulgence. It was common enough indeed in the seventh and eighth centuries. Pope Sergius, in the 384, gave three forty days indulgences at once to such as should visit the church of St. Martin on the Hills, on the festival peculiarly devoted to the service of that saint.

If the term *Indulgence* be defined, we mean a remission from temporal pains, which are due to actual sins. It will be comprehended with ease, that access to heaven is not therefore the freer to such devotees as have obtained it, unless by acts of virtue they concur to make it effectual; and yet every one is conscious of the excessive power ascribed to indulgences, and of the vast services they have done to avarice, misguided zeal, and ambition. No one however ought to imagine, that our intent is to overthrow the real advantages of them by this expression; for we are no strangers to the miracles wrought by St. Bernard, who,
while

whilst he was preaching up the indulgences of Pope Eugenius III. inflamed the hearts of the believers of his age at once with a spirit of war and contrition, and shewed the atonement of their crimes, and the remission of their torments, annexed to those crosses and swords wherewith he persuaded them to arm themselves against the infidels. We are very sensible likewise, that St. Bridget declares, in her revelations, the vision she had of our Lord Jesus Christ, who informed her, "That the most infallible way to atone for all sins, was to procure indulgences; that with respect to himself, whenever he was inclined to treat any soul with tenderness and affection, he would advise it to reside constantly at Rome, there being no place in the world where so many indulgences could be procured." To this we might add, that there is no city more commodious than this for devotees, who would turn their piety towards this object. The Basilicas have indulgences for every day in the year, and on festivals they are redoubled.

Of Indulgences for the Dead. &c.

When the question is asked in the *Catholic Christian*,
 Q. What is the meaning of *indulgences* for the dead?

A. They are not granted by way of absolution, since the pastors of the church have not that jurisdiction over the dead; but they are only available to the faithful departed, by way of *suffrage*, or spiritual succour, applied to their souls out of the treasure of the church.

Q. What is the meaning of a *jubilee*?

A. A *jubilee*, so called from the resemblance it bears with the *jubilee year* in the old law, Lev. xxv. & xxvii. (which was a year of remission, in which bondsmen were restored to liberty, and every one returned to his possessions) is a *plenary indulgence* granted every twenty-fifth year, as also upon other extraordinary occasions,

sions, to such as, being truly penitent, shall worthily receive the blessed sacrament, and perform the other conditions of fasting, alms, and prayer, usually prescribed at such times.

Q. What then is the difference between a *jubilee* and any other *plenary indulgence*?

A. A *jubilee* is more solemn, and accompanied with certain privileges, not usually granted upon any other occasions, with regard to the being absolved by any approved confessor from all excommunications, and other reserved cases, and having vows exchanged into the performance of other works of piety. To which we may add, that as a *jubilee* is extended to the whole church, which at that time joins as it were in a body, in offering a holy violence to heaven by prayer and penitential works; and as the cause for granting an indulgence at such times is usually more evident, and more or greater works of piety are prescribed for the obtaining it, the indulgence of consequence is likely to be much more certain and secure.

Of Oaths of Allegiance to Foreign Princes.

If we consider the supremacy of the Pope, and infallibility of the church of Rome, in a political point of view, viz. as prohibiting the members of it from taking oaths of allegiance to any Protestant prince where they reside, or breaking of them, the genuine nature of this religion will more evidently appear.

Pope Urban decreed, that it should be lawful for subjects to break their oaths of allegiance with all such princes as were not in communion with the Pope*.

The Pope claims a right to absolve men from their oaths, and they have frequently done it. The council of Constance has given us a remarkable instance of absolution from oaths, in the case of Frederic Duke of Austria; where they say, notwithstanding any oaths

* History of Popery, vol. I. part iii, p. 342.

actually

actually taken to the contrary, from which we absolve them, that they, and every one of them, shall effectually obey, &c. * If now this council did assume to itself a power to absolve from oaths, it is mere trifling to say that the church of Rome cannot license men to perjure or forswear themselves, since the practice is allowed to absolve men from their oaths, and the Pope has declared that truth is not to be kept with heretics.

Pope Martin V. writing to Alexander Duke of Lithuania, says, "Know ye, that you could not pledge your faith to heretics; and if you keep your faith with them, you would sin MORTALLY †.

And whilst princes are prohibited pledging or keeping faith with heretics, no doubt subjects may be absolved from their oaths to their princes by plenitude of the papal power: by the same plenitude they may be dispensed with to lie, and swear falsely. What security is there that this may not be the case? for it is equally easy to grant a dispensation to sin for the future, and to absolve for sin that is past; and the same power that can do the one can do the other: now that the Pope has done the one, is not disputed; therefore he may or can do the other ‡.

This has given occasion to a late judicious enquiry, how far Papists ought to be treated as good subjects? Of which I presume my readers will approve the following abstract.

I. It is true, "*that all and every good subject has a right to protection*, let their religious tenets be what they will, unless they are inconsistent with the interests of civil society; and therefore it is apprehended, that the laws of this land are not against the believers of *tran-*

* Council of Constance, *sess.* 35.

† See more Instances in Dr. Whitby's Discourse concerning Laws, ecclesiastical and civil, against Heretics.

‡ Dr. Sykes's Remarks on the Vindication of the Roman Catholics, p. 34.

Substantiation as such, nor against the believers of *image-worship* as such, nor against the believers of such like notions as such; which if a man can bring himself to believe, and will let others be at liberty not to believe, let him, in God's name, enjoy his notions: but when I say this, I cannot but observe, that the Papists never have at any time, in any country where they could prevent it, given or professed to give a toleration to such as dissented from their notions: they never have permitted any man any where to profess opinions contrary to the sentiments which they profess. They have always declared such to be heretics, and they have never failed to persecute such when they have had it in their power. Their professed tenets are, that such men are every where to be expelled as scabbed sheep *, which infect the whole flock of Christ, and therefore are not to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful of Christ. They have therefore no right to a toleration where they are undermost, who never at any time, or in any place where they could prevent it, have granted or professed to grant a toleration to others who have differed from them; for which reason they should not, of all people, complain, if they do not enjoy what they never yet did grant; they have no right to complain of hardship, injustice, persecution, or whatever name they will give it, if they do not obtain from our legislature what other dissenters from the church of England enjoy, a toleration and freedom from penal laws; for those who never grant, or profess to grant such privileges, have no right to complain if they are deprived of them.

II. If the Roman Catholic tenets be not against the laws of civil society here in Great Britain, why do not the Papists give the common tests of their allegiance, that all other good subjects do? Tender them to any sectary of any denomination of Protestant Dissenters, Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents, any but Papists and professed Jacobites, and they readily take

* Enquiry, p. 5. who quotes the Words of Pope Martin.

them,

them, and in consequence enjoy the liberty they have a right to : whereas, if the Papists be called upon to take the oaths, they all instantly refuse ; summon them to appear, give them notice of time and place, in times of common danger to the public, call upon them to give security for their good behaviour,—not one, where there are four or five hundred, will appear. Now, surely the protection of a government is not due to any, but such as are ready to give the ordinary tests of their allegiance to that government.

III. It is well known to all Protestants, that Pope Paul V. has absolutely forbid all Papists, or, if the term be more agreeable, all Roman Catholics, to take the oath of allegiance. He insists they cannot take it *salva fide Catholica, & salute animarum vestrarum*, consistent with the Catholic faith, and the salvation of their souls. Should I add the authority of a cardinal, I mean Bellarmine, to the authority of the Pope, it may be thought I add a notion only of a particular divine. Why now should any one employ his endeavours to have the Roman Catholics enjoy the protection of good subjects, when they will not, they *cannot*, they *dare not*, give the ordinary test of *allegiance* to the government ?

IV. The oath of allegiance is only an acknowledgment of the King to be rightful and lawful King of this kingdom, and that the Pope has no power or authority to depose him ; and that the person who takes such oath will continue to bear faith and true allegiance to him, notwithstanding any declaration of excommunication made or granted by the Pope. Now, if the Pope expressly forbids all Papists to take this oath, and declares his brief to be drawn by his *special direction* * ; and orders that they “ should not go to the churches of heretics, nor hear their sermons, nor communicate in their rites, lest they should incur the anger

* Vide Pope Paul V.'s Brief, apud Collier's Church-History, vol. II. Records, p. 105.

of God; and that they cannot, without the most evident and grievous injury of the honour of God, take the oath" of allegiance; and accordingly all do refuse to take it. What right then have Roman Catholics to protection under this government *?

Now the Papists have gone on ever since in this refusal to take the oath of allegiance, and for that reason they ought to be treated as enemies to the government.

V. Protection and allegiance, in all states, in all governments, are reciprocal. The reason of men's entering into society is, by uniting strength, to secure themselves, since otherwise they might be too weak to resist the attacks of those that might invade them: every particular private man therefore is protected by the strength of the whole, and every one that claims the advantage of this security, is under obligation to join with the society against its enemies. Hence it is, that all governors have a right to demand tests of allegiance from the people; and all those who refuse to give them, when called upon, in effect, declare themselves enemies of that society. When therefore Papists refuse the test of allegiance, they have a right to be refused protection. Nor have they any reason to complain of injustice, hardship, oppression, or by whatever name they may call the execution of the laws of this land; since an enemy of any society is by the law of self-preservation to be guarded against, and enemies are not to be treated as friends.

VI. Imagine that the legislative power in any society has fixed the person who shall govern them on the throne; now, if the community consents to, and approves of, and readily gives the test of their obedi-

* See the case of Archpresbyter Blackwell, who was here in England in King James I.'s time, who was committed to prison, and obtained his liberty by taking the oath of allegiance; and the consequence was, that he was removed from his office for taking of it, and one Birchett put in his place.

ence and submission to the person fixed by the legislature, and any sect, or the men of any profession, who refuse to take the usual oath for the proof of their allegiance, is it not natural for the government under which they live, to have a jealous eye over them, to guard against the increase of their strength, to observe whether they tamper with the people to corrupt them, to enquire who they are that endeavour to make converts to such an opposition, and to inflict some punishment on such as misbehave themselves in such manner? Now, if any convert to Popery is made an enemy by principle to our government, the government is thereby in proportion so much weakened.

When therefore our editor tells us, "unanimity can never be expected, unless all the *subjects* are equally protected,"—he should have said,—"*unless friends and enemies are equally protected*,"—and then he had spoke what he wanted to be done. But are such as refuse the common tests of friendship, to be equally protected with those that are friends?—The word *subject*, indeed, is a good term, that comprehends all who live under any government, be they what they will, friends or not friends; and if they behave themselves as good subjects, should have a right to protection. But while they acknowledge a supremacy in a foreign person, and an absolute submission to him, and own a dependence so much upon his power, as not to think it lawful to submit to our laws, but so far only as that foreign power permits, who, as their governor, pronounce it unlawful to take the oath of allegiance to our King; they cannot justly be looked upon as a sect that ought to be indulged as good friends and good subjects; but as professed subjects of a foreign power, and an enemy to that state under which they have long enjoyed peace and quiet *.

* See an Enquiry how far Papists ought to be treated here as good subjects, printed in 1746.

Of PERSECUTION by the Church of ROME.

As several of the doctrines of the church of Rome are unscriptural and absurd, it is no wonder if she could find no other way to support even the outward profession of them but by force and violence; from hence are derived those peremptory decrees in behalf of persecution, which were enacted by the fourth Lateran council, held under Pope Innocent III. in the year 1215*, and of that of Constance, that sat from 1414 to 1418.—And in the fifth council of Toledo, can. 3: these holy fathers say, “We the holy council promulge this sentence or decree, pleasing to God, that whosoever hereafter shall succeed to the kingdom, shall not ascend the throne, till he has sworn to permit no man to live in his kingdom who is not a Catholic; and if any afterwards violate this promise, let him be anathema marantha, in the presence of the eternal God, and become fuel of the eternal fire †.”

Hence it is, that Paul IV. in his dying words to the cardinals about him, recommended to them the tribunal of the inquisition, as *the best prop and main bulwark of Roman faith*. That was speaking like a Pope indeed, but not like a true vicar of Jesus Christ. Hence it was, that in the following ages that church proceeded with the utmost rigour against all those who presumed to dissent from her.

Let impartial history recount, if she can recount; the numbers of God’s creatures that have been murdered in God’s name by that church ‡.

Let history tell of the carnage committed in the many holy wars.—The holy wars!—undertaken for the extirpation of infidels §.

* Popery always the same, Introduction, p. 1.

† Grosvenor’s Sermons at Salter’s Hall, p. 12.

‡ Fordyce on the Delusive and Bloody Spirit of Popery, p. 589.

§ Busching’s History of France, vol. II. p. 339.

British Memorial, p. 15.

In Bohemia, from the year 1523 to 1632, by oppressive fines, severe discipline, and cruel deaths *.

The cruelties at Thorn in Poland, by beheading, hanging, severe whipping, &c. in order to suppress all the Protestant churches and schools, which the primate of Poland calls the sacred execution at Thorn, against the profaners of holy things, and which, he says, ought never to be forgotten †.

The poor Saltzburgers were but lately before our eyes stripped of all they had in the world, and drawn from their habitations by a bigotted priest and prince, who as a bishop had sworn it, and as a popish prince was obliged to it; their leaders seized, and thrown into dungeons; others executed with the utmost rigour; husbands torn from their wives, and parents from their children. A case so deplorable their treatment, so inhuman, that even another Popish prince, the Emperor of Germany, interposed to put a stop to it, as it was purely for conscience sake ‡.

The Vaudois, partly subject to France, and partly to the Duke of Savoy, felt the sad effects of Popish cruelties in 1646 to 1655, when the French King excited, by various methods, the Duke of Savoy to persecute them with the utmost severity, so that in Piedmont, in the space of ten years, more than 40,000 were put to death, or driven to Germany, Holland, and England §. Read the history of the persecution of the German Protestants, as well as those in the Low Countries, how they were oppressed and harrassed under innumerable

* History of Bohemia Persecution, printed 1650, p. 269 & seq.

† Primate's Letter to the Palatinates of Poland.

Political State, Aug. 1733.

‡ See a Serious Call to the City of London, containing many Accounts taken from the High Dutch, in 1732.

§ See the History of the Massacre at Piedmont, by Sir Samuel Moreland.

severities by the Popes, &c. from 1521 to 1623 §, and from thence to 1663 *.

In France, in 1685, when Lewis XIV. repealed the edict of Nantz (made by his predecessor Henry IV. for allowing the Protestants the free exercise of their religion in 1598) which he declared should be irrevocable; and though the present Lewis XIV. owned, that he owed his crown to his Protestant subjects; yet ungratefully he forced 150,000 of them out of his kingdom, dragooned others into Popery, sent others, who refused to comply, for slaves, chained them in his galleys, forced their children from them to be educated in monasteries, and shut up others to perpetual imprisonment. The Protestants at Dauphiny in France were severely persecuted in 1744, pursuant to several edicts published by the French King for the suppression of Protestants † in Languedoc; and the districts of Montauban at Puy-Laurens, Castres, Sainte Foi, Nismis, on account of their religious assemblies, were fined, imprisoned, and put to death in the years 1745, 1746, and 1747. More violent proceedings against the Protestants of Vivarais about the same time ‡; and even so lately as 1762, the reverend Mr. Rochette was executed at Thoulouse, for professing the Protestant religion, and permitting others to join with him in his own house to worship God according to their consciences ||. Nor was this a singular instance, but well accords with the articles or edicts now in force, published by the King of France §.

Let all civil and ecclesiastical histories relate the cruel proceedings against the Protestants in Hungary, in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

§ Brand's Hist. of the Reformation, in 3 vol. fol. for that period.

* Beza's History from 1621 to 1663.

† Great Britain's Memorial, p. 17.

‡ Popery always the same, p. 43.

|| Letter from France, published in the Royal Magazine for May 1762.

§ Popery always the same. The French King's Edict and Articles, from p. 78 to 100.

Let this Holy Mother Church relate the massacre of Paris, on St. Bartholomew's day, 1572, in which about 30,000 Protestants were murdered in cold blood, according to Thuanus; some authors affirms above 100,000, among whom were 5 or 600 noblemen and gentlemen of distinction. Thuanus himself calls it a most detestable villainy, and in abhorrence of St. Bartholomew's day. Such a complication of hellish cruelty, who could have thought it! found panegyrist by the abettors of Popery. *Peter Charpentier* wrote an apology for it; *John Des Caurres* extolled it in an ode, and the most luxuriant encomiums were bestowed upon it in a speech pronounced before Philip II. The holy father himself, Gregory XIII. was no sooner informed by cardinal de Lorraine, than he went in procession to St. Lewis's church, where he returned the merciful Maker and Redeemer of mankind public and solemn thanks for that bloody work. Nay, that horrible transaction was represented at Rome in a magnificent picture, with this inscription, *The triumph of the church*; which, indeed, as our author observes, was very proper, if it meant the triumph of the church of Rome over christianity and humanity itself*.

Let history relate too the massacre of Ireland in the reign of Charles I. in which about 100,000 Protestants were barbarously murdered in the space of two months, chiefly by Popish priests.

When the Popish emissaries were ripe for executing their barbarities in Ireland, their proceedings against the English were various. Some of the Irish were content to strip, plunder, and to expel them; then they were spirited up by their priest to shake off all humanity, and to murder men, women and children, which ended in this final resolution, entirely to root out the very name of a Protestant in Ireland. The many methods of cruelty are too shocking to tender minds

* See Bayle's Dictionary, Article Charpentier, and Article Caurres, or Popery always the same, p. 60.

to relate. The particulars may be seen in a small piece, intituled *Popery and Slavery displayed*, p. 19, 20.

Yet as notorious as was this scene of barbarity, it was industriously promoted by the priests, who administered the sacrament to many, on condition they would spare none; and this was backed by the benediction and indulgence of the Pope, of which the following is a true copy.

The POPE's BULL. Ad futuram Rei Memoriam.

URBANUS OCTAVUS, &c.

“ Having taken into our serious consideration the great zeal of the *Irish*, towards the propagating of the Catholic faith, and the piety of the Catholic warriors in the several armies of that kingdom (which was for that singular fervency in the true worship of God, and notable care had formerly in the like case by the the inhabitants thereof, for the maintenance and preservation of the same orthodox faith, called-of old the *Land of Saints*) and having got certain notice, how, in imitation of their godly and worthy ancestors, they endeavour, by force of arms, to deliver their thrall'd nation from the oppressions and grievous injuries of the *hereticks*, wherewith this long time it hath been afflicted and heavily burthened; and gallantly do in them what lieth to *extirpate* and *totally root out those workers of iniquity*, who in the kingdom of *Ireland* had infected, and always striving to infect, the mass of *Catholic* purity with the pestiferous leaven of their *heretical* contagion: We therefore, being willing to cherish them with the gift of those spiritual graces, whereof by God we are ordained the only disposers on earth, by the mercy of the same Almighty God, trusting in the authority of the blessed apostles *Peter* and *Paul*, and by virtue of that power of binding and loosing of souls, which God was pleas'd (without our deserving) to confer upon us: To all and every one of the faithful Christians in the

aforesaid kingdom of *Ireland*, now, and for the time of militating or fighting against the *heretics*, and others enemies of the *Catholic* faith, they being truly and sincerely penitent, after confession, and the spiritual refreshing of themselves with the sacred communion of the body and blood of Christ, do grant a full and *plenary indulgence*, and *absolute remission for all their sins*, and such as in the holy time of jubilee is usual to be granted to those that devoutly visit a certain number of privileged churches, within and without the walls of our city of Rome; by the tenour of which present letters, for once only, and no more, we freely bestow the favour of this absolution upon all and every one of them; and withal desiring heartily all the faithful in Christ, now in arms as aforesaid, to be partakers of this most precious treasure.

“ To all and every one of these aforesaid faithful Christians, we grant licence, and give power to choose into themselves, for this effect, any fit confessor, whether a secular priest, or a regular of some order, and likewise any other selected person approved of by the ordinary of the place, who, after a diligent hearing of their confessions, shall have power to liberate and absolve them from excommunication, suspension, and all other ecclesiastical sentences and censures, for whomsoever, or for what cause soever, pronounced or inflicted upon them; as also from all sins, trespasses, transgressions, crimes, and delinquencies, how heinous and atrocious soever they be; not omitting those very enormities in the most peculiar cases, which by any whatsoever former constitutions of ours, or of our predecessors Popes, (than which we will have these to be no less valued in every point) were designed to be reserved to the ordinary, or to the apostolic see; from all which the confessor shall hereby have power granted him to absolve the foresaid *Catholics* at the bar of conscience, and in that sense only. And furthermore, we give them power to exchange what vow or vows soever they were formerly

formerly aſtricted to (thoſe of religion and chaſtity excepted) into any other pious or good work or works, impoſed or to be impoſed on them, and every one of them to perform in all the foreſaid caſes, by a wholeſome penance, according to the mind and will of the confeſſor.

“ Therefore, by the tenor of theſe preſent letters, and by the virtue of that *holy ſtrict obedience*, wherein *all Chriſtians are bound unto us*, we charge and command all and every one of the reverend brethren, archbishops, biſhops, and other eccleſiaſtical prelates, and whatſoever ordinaries of places now reſiding in *Ireland*, together with all vicars, ſubſtitutes and officials under them; or theſe failing, we command all ſuch to whom in thoſe places the care of ſouls is incumbent, that as ſoon as they ſhall have received copies of theſe our letters, they ſhall forthwith, without any ſtop or delay, publiſh them, and cauſe them to be publiſhed, throughout all their churches, dioceſes, provinces, countries, cities, towns, lands, villages, and places whatſoever.
&c. &c. &c.

“ Now, that theſe principal letters of ours, which cannot be conveniently brought to every place, may the ſooner come to the notice of all, our will and pleaſure is, that any whatſoever copies or tranſcripts, whether written or printed, that are ſubſcribed with the hand of a public notary, and which have the ſeal of ſome eminent perſon in eccleſiaſtical dignity affixed thereunto, be of the ſame force, power, and authority, and have the like credit in every reſpect given unto them, as would be to theſe our principal letters, if they were ſhewn and exhibited.

“ Dated at *Rome* in the *Vatican*, or *St. Peter's* palace, the 25th of *May* 1643, and in the twentieth year of our pontificate.

M. A. Maraldus.”

Let

Let history impartially relate the slaughter of about forty thousand of poor Americans *, on pretence of their resisting the attempts made for their conversion, as well as on accounts purely political.

And let that infernal slaughter-house, the inquisition, be described in its proper colours, where all the cruelties that imagination can invent; or the malignity of demons can inflict, to insult and torture, and, if possible, to damn the miserable victim, are practised in terrible perfection. Spain can boast of many of these *holy* inquisitions, as they are pleased to call them, as at Madrid, at Seville, Toledo, Grenada, Lordova, Cuenca, Valladolid, Mincia, Lerida, Logrono, St. Jago, Saragossa, Valencia, Barcelona, and Majorca; as also without the kingdom, as in the Canary islands, Mexico, Carthagena and Lima †.

In Portugal and Italy the inquisition is in full force, and ordained merely for the extirpation of heresy, *i. e.* every thing contrary to the doctrine and practices of the church of Rome, in which they make use of the most dreadful and bloody tortures, to force persons to confess, and burn them without regard to age, sex, or condition. Once a year, or oftener, they celebrate what they call an *Auto de Fe*, or act of faith; and when the sentence of the holy tribunal of the inquisition is to be executed, it is generally on some festival, in the view of the court, and with the acclamations of the people ‡. Nay, so infatuated are they to Popish cruelty, that even the King of Portugal, on his recovery from sickness, a little before the late earthquake, caused an act of

* Bishop of Chiapas's Account of the Voyages and Cruelties of the Spaniards in America, printed at London, 1699, Oct.

† Busching's Geography, vol. II. pag. 250.

‡ See Limborch's History of the Inquisition, translated, by Dr. Chandler, with his History of Persecution prefixed.

British Memorial, and Grosvenor's Sermon at Salt. Hall.

faith to be celebrated, when three Jews, and one relapse Protestant, were burnt, as a public thanksgiving to God for his recovery.

Dr. Geddes tells us, that infinitely more Christian blood have been shed by the Papal empire and its agents, for not complying with the idolatry of its worship, than ever was shed by the Roman heathens *.

Does it appear from hence that Popery is mended in these respects, or is it easy to conceive how it ever should? Can these principles be disowned, which are declared to be the dictates of the Holy Ghost, decrees and canons framed by infallible councils, the performance of which is therein declared to be well-pleasing to God, and in themselves meritorious?

A concise account of the inquisition I have occasionally given in the history of the Reformation in the Low Countries, A. D. 1550, and need not repeat it here; but I shall add the concluding paragraph of Limborch's History of the inquisition, translated by Dr. Chandler, and with it I shall close this part.

The Papists, says Professor Limborch †, glory that the inquisition is the most certain remedy to extirpate heresies; especially, *Ludovicus à Paramo* ‡, takes a great deal of pains to show that heresies have, in several places, been extinguished by the help of the inquisition, and at last concludes in these words: "These are some of the fairest fruits, which the most fertile field of the holy office hath produced to the church in all kingdoms, where it hath not been obstructed. But amongst all provinces and countries, the kingdoms of Spain do every day receive the noblest fruits; for as in these countries the holy office of the inquisition is maintained with greater severity, and is in greater honour and esteem with the nobles and princes, so

* Geddes, vol. III. Essay VI.

† Limborch's Hist. of the Inquisition, p. 318.

‡ Lib. II. 3. 4, 5.

it flourishes in greater authority and power, whereby the judges of the earth carry on more diligent inquisition against heresies, and more effectually pull them up by the very roots." And because the inquisition is so effectual a method to extirpate heresies, he gathers from thence, that it was ordained for this purpose by the most wise providence of God. But what is really unjust in itself, and carried on by unjust methods, cannot have God for its author. Nor is success any argument that the inquisition is from God; the first inquiry is, whether it be suitable to the nature of the Christian doctrine? If it be not, 'tis then unjust and antichristian; many things are unrighteously undertaken by men, and accomplished by violence and cruelty, by which innocence is oppressed, which although God, in his just and wise counsel permits, he is far from approving. Even in Japan, a cruel persecution hath extinguished the Christian religion, as preached by the Roman priests, so that the Roman Catholic religion is equally extinguished there, by the violence of persecution, as these doctrines are in Spain, which are contrary to the church of Rome, and which they render odious by the infamous name of heresy; and yet they will not allow that any just argument can be drawn from hence to prove, that that persecution was directed by the Divine Providence, as a most effectual remedy for the extirpation of their religion. If other parties of Christians would use the same diligence and cruelty of inquisition against them, I may venture to affirm, that they themselves could not withstand it; but that, within a few years, the Popish religion would be extinguished in all Protestant countries, and scarce a single person left who would dare to profess it. But God forbid that the Christian religion should ever be propagated this way, which does not consist in a feigned and hypocritical profession, but in a sincere and undisssembled faith. And therefore, as no one ought to assume to himself the

the

the power of judging concerning it but God, the searcher of hearts, to him only let us leave it to pass the true judgment concerning every man's belief. Let us in the mean while detest the tyranny of the Papists, and strive to reduce those who in our judgment hold errors in the way of truth, by the good offices of charity and benevolence, without arrogating to ourselves a judgment over the consciences of others. And, out of a serious regard to the last great day of judgment, let us approve our consciences to God, and every one of us, expecting from his mercy an equitable and righteous judgment, pray without ceasing, **ARISE, O LORD, AND JUDGE THY CAUSE.**

Of CROISADES.

This device is said to be first hatched by that superstitious hermit named Peter of Picardy.

Pope Urban very opportunely made use of for his advantage, and under the pretence of sympathising with the unhappy Christians at Jerusalem, raised an army to favour the purposes of dominion and authority, and, in a long harangue in a general council of the west, at Cleremont, in the year 1095, he concluded his oration in the following words: "We therefore release all faithful Christians that shall bear arms against heretics and infidels of great and wonderful penance for their sins, and receive them under the defence of the church, and the protection of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Besides the particular designs of Urban in this expedition, it frequently was made to serve other purposes, as their ambition or their resentment inclined them, as we find they were afterwards against the Albigenſes or Waldenſes.

Here it may be very proper to speak a little of the persecutions carried on against the Albigenſes or Waldenſes, their principles being the same, the former
name

name being given them from their inhabiting the town Albigium; the latter as having embraced the principles in general of *Peter Waldo*; and this is amply confirmed by the Popes processes, and sentence against them, it being always in the name of Waldenses.

The first persecution was raised against them by Pope Innocent III. about the year 1198, who pretended at first to reduce them by reason and argument; and for that purpose sent two men amongst them, who found them so well established in their principles, that they offered a free and public disputation. In the meantime Pope Innocent strengthened himself, and prepared to destroy or conquer them. Upon this footing the Pope likewise sent out his spiritual thunder-bolts; or anathemas, and in the same or following year erected the inquisition; an office peculiarly intended for the finding out and punishing such as they pleased to call heretics, in which monks were principally employed, and chiefly they of the order of St. Dominic, instituted by the Pope; and by these means, together with the invitations and promises given by the Popes bulls of full pardon of sin and paradise to all that would come and bear arms against them for forty days; so that the army increased to near 100,000 *; and history mentions their destroying in the space of six months, or thereabout, 200,000 †. He likewise excommunicated and declared war against Raymond Earl of Thoulouse, and his subjects, for not joining in the persecution of the Albigenes.

Of the WORSHIP of the CHURCH of ROME.

This may be considered in regard to the objects of it, the stated daily service, and also as varied at particular times in the solemnities or ceremonies of it, and as performed by the Pope, Cardinal, or Priests. But

* Bennet's Persecution and Cruelty of the Ch. of Rome.

† Dr. Grosvenor's Sermons against Popery.

As a particular relation of all these would exceed the limits of this work, I shall only give an account of some of their solemnities and ceremonies that are most remarkable, referring the reader, for the form and method of the common and ordinary service, to the Romish missal or breviary, &c.

Of the ALTAR.

The ALTAR, according to the sacred canons, should be made of stone, and it is the bishop's province to consecrate it; the table to be of one single stone, supported by pillars; there should be three steps to go up to it, covered with a carpet, and it is the clerk's business to take care that the table be covered with a *chris-tal*, that is, a fine cloth, as white as possible, be laid upon it. All this must be observed with the greatest exactness with respect to the high altar, where Christ's body is for the generality deposited. The clerks must be dressed in their surplices when they approach it, and immediately kneel down and adore the holy sacrament. Certain rules are likewise to be observed in the change of the ornaments: the whole must be blessed, crossed, &c. sprinkled with holy water. The same formalities are to be observed with respect to the tabernacle of the altar, to the *pyx*, the box where the host is locked up, and the corporals on which they consecrate; in all which they are to provide every thing of the greatest value; neither gold, silver, or precious stones, are permitted to adorn it; and the most splendid productions of art contribute to its lustre. Tapers are set on the right and left side, which must be made of white wax, except in offices for the dead, &c.

There must be a crucifix in relieve on the altar of curious workmanship, and the crucifix must be so placed as that the foot may be as high as the top of the candlesticks. We shall pass by the cruets, basons, &c. for *washing*, &c. There is also the little bell, which is to be rung at the *Sanctus*, the two elevations; the clerk

clerk must tinkle it twice at each *Sanctus*, and at each elevation nine times, viz. thrice when the priest kneels down, thrice when he elevates the host, and thrice when he sets it down upon the altar. The same formalities are observed in regard to the chalice; &c. The altar is inclosed with rails, generally of curious workmanship, and the service conducted with much solemnity and great ceremony.

Of the DIVINE SERVICE, Canonical Hours, &c.

The service consists of prayers and holy lessons, which the church has appointed to be read every day by the clergy at particular hours. This service is called by the church the canonical hours; because it was ordained by the canons of the church, which not only prescribed the hours in which it is to be said, but likewise the particular circumstances in which it is to be said. This office is in general called the *breviary*, which has its name from being an abridgment of a longer service, that was formerly used, than is at present.

This office is to be said in a standing posture, pursuant to the ancient custom of the church, and upon the knees on the days of penance.

The office consists of seven hours, if mattins and lauds are to be reckoned one, but eight in case they are divided. In the more early ages it was composed but of six parts, which were *Tierce*, *Sexte*, and *None*, for the day, and for night, the evening, the midnight, and morning prayers. At present they are divided into seven or eight, viz. mattins for night, lauds for the morning, prime, tierce, sexte, none for the day, vespers for the evening, and compline for the beginning of the night. The hour of saying prime, is directly after sun-rising, tierce is fixed to the third hour of the day, sexte at the sixth, none at the ninth hour, vespers towards the evening, and compline after sun-set; and due care is taken

taken that these offices be all carefully performed at or near the times here specified *.

The habits of the Pope, bishops, deacons, and other inferior officers, are variously modified, according to the time, place, occasion, &c. †

Of the CEREMONIES of the MASS.

We shall now lay before our readers, in a concise manner, the ceremonies of the mass, which the Catholics look upon as the most acceptable of all adorations, and the most effectual of all prayers. The church not only prays herself at this sacrifice, which the priest offers up to God in the most solemn manner, but Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of his own body, offers up to his Father the most perfect adoration that can possibly be paid him, since it is offered by a God.

The mass consists of two parts, viz, the first, from the beginning to the offering, which was formerly called the mass of the catechumens; and the second, from the offering to the conclusion, called the mass of the faithful. All persons without distinction were present at it till the offering; then the deacon crieth out, *holy things are for such as are holy; let the profane depart hence.*

* The Papists pretend great antiquity for canonical hours; they are undoubtedly derived from Judaism, or we may trace their original from Paganism. The heathens had their mattins, and the Egyptians saluted their gods every morning; they had also their primes, seconds, and tierces, which we call prime, tierce, sexte, &c.——See Du Choul on the Religion of the Ancients *.

* See likewise Picart's *Ceremonies*, vol. I. p. 312.

When the Pope celebrates mass himself, the cardinals appear in white damask robes laced with gold. The cardinal bishops wear copes, the cardinal priests chasubles; the cardinal deacons, tunics, and all of them white damask mitres. The bishops wear copes too, but they are of rich silks embroidered with gold, and white linen mitres sewed on paste-boards.

Monsieur Picart presents us with thirty-five curious prints to illustrate the several descriptions of those ceremonies *.

I. The priest goes to the altar, in allusion to our Lord's retreat with his Apostles to the garden of Olives.

II. Before he begins mass, he says a preparatory prayer. The priest is then to look on himself as one abandoned of God, and driven out of paradise for the sin of Adam.

III. The priest makes confession for himself, and for the people, in which it is required that he be free from mortal and from venial sin.

IV. The priest kisses the altar, as a token of our reconciliation with God, and our Lord's being betrayed by a kiss.

V. The priest goes to the epistle side of the altar, and thurifies or perfumes it. Jesus Christ is now supposed to be taken and bound.

VI. The *Introite*, said or sung, i. e. a psalm or hymn, applicable to the circumstance of our Lord's being carried before Caiaphas the high-priest.

VII. The priest says the *Kyrie Eleison*, which signifies, Lord have mercy upon us, three times, in allusion to Peter's denying our Lord thrice.

VIII. The priest turning towards the altar, says, *Dominus vobiscum*, i. e. The Lord be with you: the people return this salutation, *cum Spiritu tuo*, and with thy Spirit, Jesus Christ looking at Peter.

IX. The priest reads the epistle relating to Jesus being accused before Pilate.

X. The priest bowing before the altar, says, *Munda cor*, i. e. Cleanse our hearts. The gradual is sung. This psalm is varied according as it is the time of Lent or not. The devotion is now directed to our Saviour's being accused before Herod, and making no reply.

* Vol. I. p. 324. & seq. See also the Explanation of the Mass.

XI. The priest reads the gospel wherein Jesus Christ is sent from Herod to Pilate. The gospel is carried from the right side of the altar to the left, to denote the tender of the gospel to the Gentiles after refusal by the Jews.

XII. The priest uncovers the chalice, hereby to represent our Lord was stripped in order to be scourged.

XIII. The oblation of the host, the creed is sung by the congregation. The priest then kisses the altar, then the priest offers up the host, which is to represent or import the scourging of Jesus Christ, which was introductory to his other sufferings.

XIV. The priest elevates the chalice, then covers it. Here Jesus's being crowned with thorns is thereby figured to the mind, shewing that he was going to be elevated a victim; and it is well known the victims of the Pagans were crowned before they were sacrificed to their idols.

XV. The priest washes his fingers, as Pilate washed his hands, declares Jesus innocent, blesses the bread and the wine, blesses the frankincense, and perfumes the bread and wine, praying that the smell of this sacrifice may be more acceptable to him than the smoke of victims.

XVI. The priest turning to the people, says, *Orate Fratres*, i. e. let us pray. He then bows himself to the altar, addresses himself to the Trinity, and prays in a very low voice. This is one of the secretums of the mass, and the imagination of the devout Christian is to find out the conformity between this and Christ being cloathed with a purple robe; but we shall be cautious of adding more on this head, that we may not lose ourselves in the boundless ocean of allusions.

XVII. The priest says the preface at the close of the *Secretum*. This part of the mass is in affinity to Jesus Christ being condemned to be crucified. The priest uses a prayer to God the Father, which is

followed by the *Sanctus*, holy, holy, holy is the Lord, &c. which the people sing.

XVIII. The priest joining his hands, prays for the faithful that are living. This is said to be in allusion to Jesus Christ bearing the cross to die upon, that we might live.

XIX. The priest covers with a cloth the host and chalice, St. Veronica offering her handkerchief to Jesus Christ.

XX. The priest makes the sign of the cross upon the host and chalice, to signify that Jesus Christ is nailed to the cross.

XXI. The priest adores the host before elevated, and then he raises it up, in the best manner, to represent our Saviour lifted up upon the cross. He repeats the Lord's prayer, with his arms extended, that his body might represent the figure of a cross, which is the ensign of Christianity.

XXII. The priest likewise consecrates the chalice, and elevates it, to represent the blood of Jesus Christ shed upon the cross.

XXIII. The priest says the *Memento* for the faithful that are in purgatory. This prayer is in allusion to that which our Lord made for his enemies; but this allusion would be forced and unnatural, unless the devotees looked upon themselves as his enemies.

XXIV. The priest then raises his voice, smiting his breast, begs God's blessing on himself and congregation, for the sake of such saints as he enumerates, and implores the divine Majesty for a place in paradise, to imitate the thief upon the cross.

XXV. The priest elevates the host and cup, and says the *per omnia*, then the Lord's prayer. The sign of the cross, which he makes on the host, the chalice, and the altar, is to represent to God that bleeding sacrifice which his son offered up to him of himself; then the devout Christian becomes the child

child of God, and is in allusion to the virgin Mary's being bid to look on St. John as her son.

XXVI. After the Lord's prayer, the priest says a private one to God, to procure his peace by the mediation of the Virgin Mary and the saints, then puts the sacred host upon the paten, and breaks it, to represent Jesus Christ giving up the ghost.

XXVII. The priest puts a little bit of the host into the chalice. The true Christian is now with an eye of faith to behold Jesus Christ descending into *Limbo*, i. e. hell.

XXVIII. Then the priest says, and the people sing, *Agnus Dei*, &c. thrice over, and the priest smites his breast. This action is an allusion to those who, having seen our Lord's sufferings, returned home smiting their breasts.

XXIX. After the *Agnus Dei* is sung, the priest says a private prayer for the peace of the church. He then kisses the altar, and the instrument of peace called the paxis, which being received at his hands by the deacon, it is handed about to the people to be kissed, and passed from each other with these words, *peace be with you*; and whilst the paxis is kissing, the priest prepares himself for the communion by two other prayers, when he adores the host, and then says with a low voice, *I will eat of the celestial bread*; and smiting his breast, says, *I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter into my house*, three times after eating of the bread. He uncovers the chalice, repeating vers. 1. of the 115th psalm according to the Vulgate. When the priest has received the communion, he administers it to the people. The application of these ceremonies is to the death and burial of Jesus Christ, and his descent into hell.

XXX. After this the priest, putting the wine into the chalice, in order to take what is called the ablution, repeats a short prayer; then he causeth wine and water to be poured out for the second ablu-

tion, accompanied with another short prayer, and then salutes the congregation. These ablutions allegorically represent the washing and embalming the body of Jesus Christ, &c.

XXXI. The priest sings the post communion, or prayer for a good effect of the sacrament then received, expressed by the glorious resurrection of the regenerate Christians, and is to be looked upon as the representation of our Lord's resurrection.

XXXII. The priest turning to the people, says, *Dominus vobiscum*, salutes the congregation, as the ambassador of Christ, with the message of peace.

XXXIII. The priest reads the beginning of St. John's gospel, and particularly of Jesus's appearing to his mother and disciples, and uses some short prayers.

XXXIV. The priest dismisses the people with these words, *Ite, missa est*, depart, the mass is concluded: to which they answer, God be thanked. This, they say, points to the ascension of Jesus Christ, where he receives the eternal reward of that sacrifice, both as priest and victim.

XXXV. The people receive the benediction of the priest or bishop, if he is present, to represent the blessings promised, and poured down upon the apostles by the Holy Ghost.

This benediction must be given after kissing, with eyes erected to heaven, and their arms stretched out, and then gently brought back to the stomach, that the hands may join in an affectionate manner for the congregation of the faithful. The extension of the arms, and joining of the arms, are both mysterious, and shew the charity with which the priest calls his spiritual brethren to God. When he pronounces the benediction, he must lean in an engaging posture towards the altar, as prescribed by the Italian symbolical authors, viz. Piscara, Baudry, and others.*

* Ficart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. I.

Of the ADORATION of the Host.

The host, or consecrated wafer, among the Roman Catholics, they worship with the profoundest reverence; of which Dr. Middleton relates as follows. "This celebrated act of Popish idolatry, the adoration of the host, I must confess that I cannot find the least resemblance of it in any part of the Pagan worship; and as oft as I have been standing by at mass, and seen the whole congregation prostrate on the ground in the humblest posture of adoring at the elevation of this consecrated piece of bread, I could not help reflecting on that passage of Tully, when speaking of the absurdity of the Heathens in the choice of their Gods. But, says he, was any man ever so mad as to take that which he feeds upon for a God? This was an extravagance reserved for Popery alone, and is now become the principal part of worship, and the distinguishing article of faith in the creed of modern Rome *.

The general division of masses is into *high* and *low*. *High mass*, called also *grand mass*, is that sung by the choristers, and celebrated with the assistance of a deacon and a subdeacon. *Low mass* is that wherein the prayers are barely rehearsed, without any singing, and performed without much ceremony, or the assistance of a deacon and subdeacon. As to ordinary masses, there are some which are said for the Christian's soul, for releasing it from purgatory, or mitigating its punishment there. A sufficient sum must be left to the priest for this purpose. The dying man sometimes bequeathes 20 or 30,000 masses to his soul, charging the pastor, on whom he principally relies, to remit this stock to him in the other world. There are likewise *private masses* for the recovery of stolen goods, for health, and for travellers, or for returning God thanks for particular mercies; these are called *votive masses*. The

* Middleton's Letters, p. 179.

mass used at sea, where the cup is omitted, lest the wine should be spilt by the ship's motion, is called the *dry mass*.

There are several sorts of solemn masses; such are the collegiate, the pontifical, those celebrated before the Pope, cardinals, or bishops, at Christmas, Passion week, &c.

When HIGH MASS is performed episcopally, or by a bishop, it is attended with more ceremony and magnificence: As soon as the bishop is observed to come in sight, the bells are rung; on his setting his foot within the church-doors, the organs begin to play. The master of the ceremonies gives the sprinkler to the head canon, who presents it, after he has kissed both that and his sacred hand. His lordship sprinkles himself, and then the canons, with it, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and then goes and says a prayer before the altar, on which stands the holy sacrament, at a desk prepared for that particular purpose, and does the same at the high altar; from whence he withdraws into the vestry, and there puts on his peculiar ornaments, in the following order.

The subdeacon goes to a little closet contiguous to the altar, and takes from thence the episcopal sandals and stockings, which he elevates and presents to the bishop. Then the deacon kneels down, and pulls off his lordship's shoes and stockings, who is in the midst of seven or eight acolites, or readers, all upon their knees, as well as the deacon, in their respective habits, who spreads the prelate's robes. Two acolites, after they have washed their hands, take the sacred habiliments, holds them up, and gives them to the two deacon assistants, to put upon the bishop as soon as he has washed his hands. The deacon salutes the bishop, takes off his upper garment, and puts on his *amiot*, the cross whereof he kisses; then they give him the albe, the girdle, the cross for his breast, the stole, and pluvial. He kisses the cross upon receiving each of them, thereby

to testify his veneration of the cross; the deacons and assistants likewise kiss these sacred vestments. As soon as the bishop is seated, they put his mitre on, and a priest presents him with the pastoral ring. The deacon gives him his right glove, and the sub-deacon his left, which each of them kiss, as also the hand they have the honour to serve in all these circumstances. There are some pretty ceremonies to be observed, which those who are fond of mysteries may endeavour to account for. It is more material to acquaint our readers, that ejaculatory prayers have been adapted to each individual piece of the episcopal robes, and that the devotion of this ceremony is supported and confirmed by the singing the office of tierce.*

The bishop being thus dressed in all his habiliments †, his clergy range themselves round about him. Two deacons, who are canons, place themselves on each side of him, both in their dalmaticas; and after them a deacon and subdeacon. Then the incense-bearer with the censer, and a priest with the navet, out of which the bishop takes incense, puts it into the censer, and gives it his benediction. After this he

* Prayers intended to return God thanks for the sanctification of his church by the Holy Ghost.

† Each of these have a mysterious significance; the *stole* represents the yoke of the gospel; the *shoes* being taken off, alludes to Moses putting off his shoes; the *Dalmatica* is to represent to the deacon that he must be crucified to the world: the *albe* denotes the purity of the priest's soul; the *pastoral ring* implies the priest's spiritual marriage with the church; his *gloves* are to denote that he is insensible of his good works; the *girdle*, that he will be girded with justice and virtue; the *sandals*, that is to walk in the paths of the Lord; the horns of the *mitre*, the Old and New Testament; the shepherd's *crook*, his correction and paternal authority; the *pluvial*, which was formerly used by travellers, to represent the miseries of this life, and thus the bishop is to become a living image of the true Christian. This account is given by Cassius: but to shew us the propriety and reality of these pretended characters, requires some farther explication and proof. Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p. 335.

kisses

kisses the cross, which is upon the vestry altar, and then goes in procession to the other altar, where he is to celebrate the mass. The incense-bearer walks at the head of the procession; two wax-candle bearers, with lighted tapers in their hands, march next on each side of him who bears the cross; all the clergy follow them; the subdeacon who is to sing the epistle, carries before his breast the New Testament shut, with the bishop's maniple in it; a deacon and priest march just before the bishop; the bishop carrying his shepherd's crook in his left hand, to dispense his blessings to those good Christians he passes in the way. The bishop being advanced to the altar, bows himself once to the clergy, and when he enters on the first step of the altar, delivers his crook to the subdeacon, and the deacon takes off the mitre; then the prelate and clergy bow to the altar, or rather to the cross on the altar; after which the clergy withdraw, except two priests assistants, one on his right, and the other on his left hand, with the incense-bearer, the subdeacon, and two deacons assistants, and then the ceremony of the mass service begins with the *Confiteor**, &c. and the choir sings the introite §.

The SOLEMN MASS, celebrated by the POPE,

Has much of magnificence and ceremony: we shall relate a simple part †. A pontifical solemn mass principally differs in two respects, always observed, when his holiness himself officiates. The first is this, the two gospels are sung, one in Greek, and the other in Latin; the second, that the communion is different in the papal mass, and performed after the following manner: after the *Agnus Dei* is sung, his holiness goes to his throne; the cardinal deacon of the gospel stands in such a manner on the epistle side, with his hands clo-

* See Picart's Religious Cer. vol. I. p. 336.

§ Offices, Vestments, and other Distinctions, see the Dict.

† Apion's Account, in his *Tableau de la Cour de Rome*, and Picart's Cer. vol. I. p. 339.

sed together, that he cannot only see the sacrament on the altar, but the Pope likewise going to his throne. When his holiness is seated, the deacon goes and takes the consecrated host upon the paten, covered with a veil, and, turning to the people, elevates it three times successively, that is to say, in the middle and at each end of the altar. After that he gives it to the subdeacon, who carries it to his holiness; in the mean time, the same deacon takes the chalice, in which is the consecrated wine, and having elevated it three times as he did the water before, carries it to the Pope, who adore Jesus Christ under both kinds, as soon as they are brought to him, which he performs with a moderately low bow of half his body in a standing posture; and when the deacon and sub deacon are come close to him, they place themselves one on his right hand, and the other on his left hand; his holiness takes the large host which is upon the paten, and communicates, putting it into his mouth: he then gives two small ones to the deacon and subdeacon, who are kneeling, and kisses his hand before they receive them. The deacon however still holds the chalice, till the assistant cardinal bishop, dressed in his cope, comes up to the pontifical throne, when the Pope's vestry-keeper presents him with a small gold Pipe, one end whereof he dips into the chalice, and his holiness at the same time takes hold of the other, and inclining his head a little, sucks up a part of the consecrated wine, leaving the rest to the deacon, who carries the chalice to the altar, and there sucks up a part of it, and leaves a little for the subdeacon, who drinks it without the Pipe, as also that which is poured out for the ablution of the chalice, which he wipes with the purificatory, or white linen cloth: in the mean time his holiness gives the kiss of peace only to the deacon, and the communion only under one kind to the other cardinals, ambassadors, princes, prelates, and sometimes to private persons, who have desired to receive that mark
of

of honour from him *, after which he returns to the altar, and goes through the mass with the usual ceremonies and solemnity.

We might here relate the peculiar ceremonies attending high mass at Christmas, when his holiness officiates, who, being dressed in all his pontifical ornaments (the most remarkable whereof on this occasion are the white pluvial and precious mitre) by the cardinal deacons already in their robes, blesses the incense presented to the thurifier; after that the pontiff is preceded by the Roman and other prelates, who all wear white mitres.

The incense-bearer, and seven acolytes, each with a wax-taper in his hands, walk before the cross-bearer, and a clerk of the chamber before the incense-bearer, who holds a sword lifted up, with a cap upon it, which is a representation perhaps of the irresistible power and efficacy of the pontifical sword, which Christ's vicar has inherited from St. Paul, with that of freeing Christians from the bondage of the devil, by a right acquired by the son of God, whose nativity is then celebrated. It is considered likewise as an emblem of the church's dignity and freedom under the government of the Pope. Many of the superior clergy make up this holy procession; and should the Emperor, or any other sovereign prince, happen to be at Rome at that time, he must carry the train of the Pope's mantle; two cardinals likewise hold up the two ends of it. His holiness walks in a very stately and majestic manner, under a canopy supported by eight gentlemen of the first rank.

As soon as the Pope is got into the church, he passes on to a chapel, and then sits down. The cardinals come and bow to him, and kiss the hem of the holy father's pluvial on the right side; then comes the other prelates in order, and kiss his right knee. The Latin and Greek deacons, who assist his holiness, stand

* The Emperor and the King of France always receive in both kinds.

in readiness at the altar. After some anthems are sung, a vestry-keeper puts on the arms of a Latin subdeacon, a small napkin, whereon are laid his holiness's sandals and stockings. The subdeacon carries altogether to the Pope, with his hands held up to his eyes. The acolites follow him, and whilst the subdeacon and a gentleman of the privy chamber get under the holy father's pluvial, to put on his stockings and his sandals, the acolites take care to spread the borders of the pluvial whilst the subdeacon is putting them on. The assistant bishops who are present at this religious ceremony hold before his holiness a book and a wax-taper, who, with his assistant deacons, sings an anthem and a psalm. The choir sing tierce, during which the Pope rises, and an assistant bishop goes up to him with the pontifical; two taper-bearers attend with lights in their hands. The pontiff takes off his mitre, which is done frequently in this ceremony, and puts it on again. Then an assistant bishop lays the pontifical on his own head, that his holiness may read the office of the day, and another assistant supports the book in one hand, and holds a taper in the other: when the pontiff is seated again, and his mitre put on, he is presented with some water to wash him. His holiness having washed, the gospel deacon, assisted with two others, takes off his mitre, pluvial, and stole, in order to put on several other robes, which the acolites bring him from the altar, viz. the girdle, the breast-cross, the dalmatica, the tunic, the albe, the gloves, &c. all which must be devoutly kissed, and the *pallium*, the cross whereof his holiness kisses. Lastly, they put the ring on his finger, called the pontifical ring. His holiness thus equipped, and followed by two auditors, holding up the corners of the pluvial, humbly proceeds to the *Confiteor* before the steps of the altar, and the three youngest cardinal priests advance to kiss the holy father's mouth and his breast. Then the gospel deacon censures his holiness, and his holiness the altar, and then

then the ceremony of the service begins; during which there is the ceremony of delivering to the Pope a purse with twenty-five julio's in it of antique money; and the subdeacons and the master of the ceremonies kiss the Pope's feet, with some other insignificant ceremonies.

Of saying the Mass in LATIN.

The Catholics say it is no hindrance to the devotion of the common people in the least, provided they be well instructed in the nature of this sacrifice, and taught how to accompany the priest with prayers and devotions adapted to every part of the mass; such as they commonly have in their *Manuals*, or other prayer-books.

It is a common sacrifice that is offered for all, and in some manner by all; but as for the particular form of prayers used by the priest in the mass, there is no obligation for the faithful to recite the same. All that God or his church requires from them, is to assist at that sacrifice with attention and devotion; and this they fully comply with, when they endeavour to follow the directions given by them, and use such prayers as are best adapted to each part of the mass, though they be not the same as the priest uses.

Of the Procession on GOOD-FRIDAY.

The gloomy solemnity of the day does not permit of certain honours which otherwise would be paid to his holiness. The cardinals don't bow to him, nor do the ministers who are to sing the passion kiss his foot. When those who sing the service come to those words, "having bowed down his head, he yielded up the ghost," the Pope, the minister who officiates, and the rest of the congregation, turn themselves towards the altar, kneel down, and pray with a very low voice. In the night

night, at 22 o'clock, according to the Italian manner of counting the hours, the Greeks perform the obsequies of our Saviour, in their own tongue, round a great crucifix, and on a bed of state, adorned with flowers. At Courtray, a town in the Austrian Netherlands, there is a procession on Good-Friday to mount Calvary. The city gives twenty-five livres to a poor man to represent the suffering Saviour, while the monks assure him of salvation if he die under the wounds or blows given him.---nor is the procession at Brussels, in which the crucifixion of our Lord is represented, less extraordinary in its circumstances. The city and court join in the solemnity, which is attended with such a parade of ceremonies as are too numerous to mention *.

The PRONE or HOMILY.

The Prone, or Homily, is too considerable a part of the service to be omitted. Under the word Prone, *Alet's Ritual* tells us, we are to include the instruction which is given to the people relating to what is necessary for salvation; the prayers of the church in a peculiar manner for the faithful; the publication of festivals, fasts, banns of matrimony, holy orders, marriages, and other things concerning the discipline of the church. The Prone follows the gospel, because this part of divine service is particularly intended for the explication of the mysteries of religion, and the sacred writings. This is performed with so much ceremony, that I shall beg leave to refer the reader to *Alet's Ritual*, or Picart's religious ceremonies, vol. I. pag. 360.

* See Picart, vol. II. pag. 26, 27, 28.

Of the Devotion of Catholics to the Virgin Mary.

1. It is, they say, grounded upon her great dignity as mother of God, and the close relation which she has thereby to Jesus Christ her son; for how is it possible to love and honour Christ with our whole heart, and not value and love his mother?

2. It is grounded upon that supereminent grace, which was bestowed upon her, to prepare her for that dignity; upon account of which she was saluted by the angel *Gabriel*, St. Luke, i. 28. full of *grace*, and by St. *Elizabeth* she is stiled *blessed among women*, Luke i. 42.

3. It is grounded upon her extraordinary *sanctity*; for if she was *full of grace* before she conceived in the womb the fountain of all grace, to what a degree of sanctity and grace must she have arrived, during so many years as she lived afterwards? especially since she bore nine months in her womb the author of all sanctity, and had him thirty years under her roof, ever contemplating him and his heavenly mysteries, St. Luke ii. 19 and 51. and on her part never making any resistance to the affluence of his grace ever flowing in upon her happy soul.

4. It is grounded upon that supereminent degree of heavenly glory with which God has now honoured her, in proportion to her grace and sanctity here upon earth, and the great interest she has with her blessed Son, and through him with his heavenly Father*.

Of the Use of BEADS, the ROSARY, &c.

Q. Why do Catholics so often repeat the *Hail, Mary*?

A. To commemorate the incarnation of the Son of God; to honour his blessed mother, and to desire her prayers.

* Catholic Instructed, p. 235.

Q. What

Q. What is the meaning of the *Beads*?

A. It is a devotion, consisting of a certain number of *our father* and *bail Maries*, directed for the obtaining of blessings from God, through the prayers and intercession of our Lady.

Q. But is it not highly absurd, that, according to the common way of laying the beads, there are repeated ten *bail Maries* for one *our father*?

A. It would be absurd indeed, and blasphemous too, if the meaning of this were to signify that the blessed Virgin is either more powerful or more merciful than her Son, or that we have a greater confidence in her than in him; but we are far from any such notions.

Q. Why then is the *bail Mary* repeated so much oftener in the beads than the Lord's prayer?

A. Because the beads being a devotion particularly instituted to commemorate the incarnation of Christ, and to honour him in his blessed mother, it was thought proper to repeat so much the oftener that prayer, which is particularly adapted to these ends. In the meantime, it may be proper to take notice, 1. That if in the beads there be ten *bail Maries* said for one *our father*, in the mass and office of the church, almost all the prayers are directed to God alone. 2. That every *bail Mary*, both by the nature of the prayer, and the intention of the church, is directed more to the honour of the son than of the mother, as well because the church, in honouring the mother, has principally in view the honour of the son, as also because this prayer particularly relates to the incarnation of Christ; and if withal it begs her prayers, then she is only desired to pray for us.

To which if we add, that her prayers are ten times better and more acceptable to God than ours, it will appear no ways absurd that we should so frequently desire her prayers; for as to the repetition of the same prayer, it is what is recommended to us by the

example of our Lord, St. Matt. xxvii. 42, 44, &c. and has nothing of absurdity in it.

Q. What is the meaning of the *Rosary*?

A. The rosary is a method of saying the beads, so as to meditate upon the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Christ; and it is divided into three parts, each part consisting of five mysteries, to be contemplated during the repeating of five decads or tens upon the beads. The first five are called the five joyful mysteries, viz. the Anunciation, when our Lord was conceived in his mother's womb; the Visitation, when the blessed Virgin visited her kinswoman St. Elizabeth, and by her was declared *blessed among women*, &c. the Nativity of our Lord, his presentment in the temple, together with the purification of the blessed Virgin, and his being found in the temple in the midst of the doctors, &c. The five next are called the dolorous and sorrowful mysteries, as having relation to the passion of Christ, and are, his prayer and agony in the garden, his being scourged at the pillar, his crowning with thorns, his carriage of his cross, and his crucifixion and death. The five last are called the five glorious mysteries, viz. the resurrection of our Lord, his ascension into heaven, the coming of the Holy Ghost, the assumption of the blessed Virgin, and her coagmenation, together with the eternal glory of the saints in the kingdom of heaven *.

Of the Invocation of ANGELS and SAINTS.

Q. What is the doctrine and practice of the Catholic church, with regard to the invocation of angels and saints?

A. We hold it to be pious and profitable to apply ourselves to them in the way of desiring them to pray to God for us; but not so as to address ourselves to them

* Catholic Christian instructed, pag. 234.

as if they were the authors or disposers of pardon, grace, or salvation, or as if they had any power to help us independently of God's good will and pleasure.

Q But, in some of the addresses made to the saints and angels, I find petitions for mercy, aid or defence; what say you?

A. The meaning of those addresses, as far as they are authorised by the church, is no other than to beg mercy of the saints in this sense, that they would pity and compassionate our misery, and would pray for us. In like manner, when we beg their aid and defence, we mean to beg the aid and defence of their prayers; and that the angels to whom God has given a charge over us, would assist us and defend us against the angels of darkness; and this is no more than what the Protestant church asks in the collect for Michaelmas day, praying that as the holy angels always serve God in heaven, so by his appointment they may succour and defend us upon earth *.

Of the Use and Veneration of RELICKS in the Catholic Church.

Q. What do you mean by relicks?

A. The dead bodies or bones of the saints we call relicks; as also whatever other things have belonged to them in their mortal life.

Q. And what is the doctrine and practice of the church with regard to these things?

A. We keep such things as these with a religious respect and veneration, for the sake of those to whom they have belonged, but principally for the sake of him to whom the saints themselves belonged; that is, for the greater glory of God, who is glorious in his saints, and to whom is referred all the honour that is given to his saints.

* Catholic Christian, page 224.

Q. What reason has the church for shewing this respect to the dead bodies or bones of the saints?

A. 1. Because they have been the victims, and the living temples of God, in which his divine Majesty has, in a particular manner, inhabited, and which he has sanctified by his presence and grace; and therefore, if God required of Moses, *Exod. iii. 5.* and of Joshua, *Josh. v. 15.* to loose their shoes from off their feet, in respect to the ground on which they stood, as being rendered holy by his presence, or that of his angels, we must think that it is agreeable to his divine Majesty, that we should testify the like honour to that venerable earth of the bodies of his saints, which he in such an extraordinary manner has sanctified, by abiding in them as in his temples. 2. We know the bodies of the saints are preordained to a happy resurrection and eternal glory, and upon this account also deserve our respect. 3. The bodies and other relicks of the saints have been, and are daily the instruments of the power of God for the working of innumerable miracles; which God, who is truth and sanctity itself, would never have effected, if it had not been agreeable to him that we should honour and respect these precious remnants of his servants. 4. The relicks and shrines of the martyrs and other saints serve very much to encourage the faithful to an imitation of their virtues, and to help to raise their souls from the love of things present and temporal to the love of things eternal.

Of MIRACLES performed by or before the Images of the Virgin Mary and other Saints.

Aringhus, touching upon this subject, says, that the images of the blessed Virgin shine out continually by new and daily miracles, to the comfort of their votaries, and the confusion of all gainsayers. Within these few years, says he, under every Pope successively some or other of our sacred images, especially of the more antient, have made themselves illustrious,
and

and acquired a peculiar worship and veneration, by the exhibition of fresh signs ; as it is notorious to all who reside at Rome. He instances the images of St. Dominica, so conspicuous at this day for its never ceasing miracles, which attract the resort and admiration of the whole Christian world *.

In a collegiate church of regular canons, called St. Mary of Imprunetta, about six miles from Florence, there is a miraculous picture of the *Virgin Mary*, painted by St. Luke, and held in the greatest veneration throughout all Tuscany, which, as oft as that state happens to be visited by any calamity, or in any peculiar danger, is sure to be brought out and carried in procession through the streets of Florence, attended by the Prince himself, with all the nobility, magistrates, and clergy, where it has never failed to afford them present relief in the greatest difficulties; in testimony of which they produce antient acts and records, confirmed by public inscriptions, setting forth all the particular benefits miraculously obtained from each procession, and the several offerings made on that account to the sacred image for many centuries past, down to these very times †.

All their apologists indeed declare, that they do not ascribe these miracles to any power in the image itself, but to the power of God, who is moved to work them by the prayers and intercessions of his saints, for the benefit of those that have sought that intercession before the pictures or images, and in order to bear testimony to the faith and practice of the church in that particular article ‡.

Dr. Middleton tells us, in his letters from Rome, that they pretend to shew us there two original impressions of our Saviour's face, on two different hand-

* Aringhus Roma subterranean. tom. ii. p. 464, sect. 13. as quoted by Middleton.

† Middleton's Prefatory Discourse to his Letters from Rome, page 12.

‡ Catholic Christian, page 251.

kerchiefs, the one sent a present by himself to Agbarus Prince of Edessa; the other presented by him at the time of his crucifixion to a saint or holy woman named Veronica, on a handkerchief which she had lent him to wipe his face on that occasion; both which handkerchiefs are still preserved, as they affirm, and shewn with the utmost reverence; the first in St. Sepulchre's church, the second in St. Peter's, where, in honour of this sacred relic, there is a fine altar built by Pope Urban VIII. with a statue of Veronica herself, and there is a prayer in their book of offices, ordered by the rubric to be addressed to this sacred and miraculous picture, in the following terms.---

"Conduct us, O thou blessed figure, to our proper home, where we may behold the pure face of Christ *."

Of the Ceremony of carrying the CROSS or CRUCIFIX before the sovereign Pontiff.

On all common, but public occasions, the cross is carried before the sovereign Pontiff. At the end of a pike about ten palms or spans long, the image of our Saviour is turned towards the Pope; and the chaplain, who carries it, walks bareheaded, when his holiness goes in public, or is carried on mens shoulders; but when he goes in a coach or chair the chairman carries the crucifix on horseback bareheaded. But on all solemn and religious occasions where the Pope attends in his sacred robes, an auditor of the rota carries the crucifix at the solemn procession, on horseback, dressed in a rocket and capuche, or sort of cope, purple-coloured; but there are three days in Passion week on which he and the sacred college go to the chapel in mourning, without the cross being borne before him.

* Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 174.

See likewise Conformity of antient and modern Ceremonies, page 158.

We find likewise, even as early as the fourth century, the cross was in great veneration among Christians; to countenance which the Papists have formed many fabulous stories and pretended miracles. It has however been an increasing superstition ever since, so that festivals have been invented in honour of the cross. The invention of the cross is celebrated on the third day of May; the exaltation of it on the fourteenth day of September; and one of the principal relicks is the pretended parts of the cross on which Christ was crucified. The rituals prescribe the proportionable *form* and manner in which they should be made, and in which at our devotion it should be figured on the breast. The consecration of public and private crosses is another ceremony, or rather a formal service; in which an incredible number of ceremonies are united. The consecration of crosses is said to be very antient, at least as early as the seventh century: some celebrated crucifixes have likewise peculiar homage paid them; such as the crucifix called *Santissimo Crocefisso* at Naples, the *Santo Volto* at Lucca, the crucifix at Loretto, the sacred crucifix at Trent; to which we may add that of the Beguine nuns at Ghent; to all of which some pretended miracles are attributed *.

Of the CONSECRATION of public and private CROSSES.

Crosses of all sizes are consecrated after the following manner: an acolyte is very busy in lighting up the candles at the foot of the cross, and the celebrant, with a grave aspect, is seated in a chair provided for this purpose, with his pastoral crosier in his hand, and in the midst of the clergy in their surplices, appears very intent upon this ceremony. The celebrant must be dressed in all his pontifical habilaments; the amiot, albe, girdle, stole, white pluvian, plain mitre,

* See Baudry, *Manuale Sacr. Cerem.* page 76.
Picart's *Religious Ceremonies*, vol. I. page 349.

and his pastoral staff; thus equipped, he presents himself before the great cross, and part of the clergy turn towards him; he makes a discourse to the people on the excellence of the cross, at the foot whereof three tapers are lighted, and then the celebrant takes off his mitre, and repeats a prayer before the cross. The Litany follow it, and then an anthem; he then sprinkles the cross with holy water, and afterwards perfumes it with frankincense; then the candles are placed on the arms of the cross, to which, if high, he ascends by a ladder, and concludes with music, singing of psalms and prayer *.

Of the ADORATION of the Cross.

After nones, the officiating priest goes up to the altar, preceded by the acolites without tapers, and the rest of the ministers of the altar: they first kneel before it, and bow to the cross; a duty at all times necessary, but more especially on this day. Immediately after that the officiating priest repeats certain prayers with a low voice; then the acolites cover the table of the altar, and lay the *mass book* on a black cushion on the epistle side; then the minister goes up to the altar, and kisses it, and afterwards repeats or sings with a low voice the several lessons of the day, and another minister after him. Prayers being ended, the officiating priest uncovers the top of the cross, and elevates it with both his hands, at the same time singing these words, *Behold the wood of the cross*; then the congregation rise up with their heads uncovered, then the ministers of the altar sing these words, *on which the Saviour of the world hath suffered death*. The choir answers, *Let us come and adore it*. Then they all fall on their knees, and immediately rise up; then the officiating priest uncovers the right arm of the crucifix, and the head of Jesus; shews it, elevates it, and says as before. Then he uncovers it

* Pontific. Rom.

quite, and with a louder voice repeats the same ceremonies. The ceremony of the adoration being ended, the deacon salutes the cross, elevates it, and carries it to the altar with bended knees, and when he lays it down bows before the altar.

Of the SIGN of the Cross.

The Papists say, this holy sign is made use of in all the sacraments, to give us to understand that they have their whole force and efficacy from the *cross*, that is, from the death and passion of *Jesus Christ*. *What is the sign of Christ*, says St. Augustine, *which all know, but the cross of Christ, which sign, if it be not applied to the foreheads of the believers, to the water with which they are baptised, to the chrism with which they are anointed, to the sacrifice with which they are fed, none of these things are duly performed* *.

St. Chrysostom, towards the close of the fourth century, displays also the miraculous cures wrought by the use of consecrated oil, and by the sign of the cross; which last he calls a defence against all evil, and a medicine against all sickness, and affirms it to have been miraculously impressed in his own time in peoples garments †.

Bellarmino, to justify this device of the sign of the cross, or of crossing themselves, and the wonderful virtue and benefits thence arising, urges the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb on the posts of their doors, Exod. xii. 7. God's commanding in a vision to the prophet a mark to be set on such of the inhabitants of Jerusalem as had not wallowed in the same transgression with the rest, but wept for all the abominations that had been done in the midst thereof, Ezek. ix. 4. What is this to the Papist's crossing himself,

* Catholic Christian, page 1, 2.

† T. XI. page 387. T. 5. page 271. quoted by Middleton in his Inquiry into the miraculous Powers, page 136.

to keep the devil from him, to make him lucky in his business, to preserve him from sin, to guard him from danger, &c.?

This suggests the following reflections, 1. That the signing one's self with the cross hath neither command nor example in scripture, nor any promise of any special grace or benefit to be thereupon conferred; therefore there is no reason to expect any such extraordinary virtues or assistance from using the same.

2. If the sign of the cross was first instituted by men only to be an external mark of Christians from others, then it is no such sacred and venerable sign as to be able to convey to or operate in us such blessings; but the first is plain, as well from the silence of scripture, as from the voice of history.

3. If therefore external signs, instituted by God himself, when they become the instruments or occasion of superstition or idolatry, are to be taken away, then much more signs of human institution, as this of the cross is.

Therefore, since Papists have so horribly abused this sign, every Protestant justly disowns and protests against the superstitious and idolatrous conceits which they have introduced relating thereunto; amongst whom the sign of the cross makes void the cross of Christ, they attributing to the cross that which solely and peculiarly belongs to Christ, and is the effect of his death through faith in him, but not effected by the sign of the cross*.

Of FASTS, LENT, SAINTS DAYS, &c. in the Church of Rome.

Montanus, towards the end of the second century, was the first that we read of who instituted laws concerning fasting. Miltiades, bishop of Rome, or-

* See History of Popery, vol. I. part 1. page 110.
Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 145.

dained, A. C. 311, that none should fast on Thursdays or Sundays, because Thursday Christ instituted his supper, and on Sunday he ascended into heaven. Pope Gregory I. in the sixth century, excepted Sundays only, and added four days to Lent, viz. Ash-Wednesday, and the three following days, to make up the number of forty days which Christ fasted, and prohibited the eating not only flesh, but cheese, milk and eggs. Pope Gregory II. decreed, that, in Lent, they should fast on Thursday as well as other days. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory VII. decreed, that Saturday should be kept as a day of fasting, because on that day Christ lay in his sepulchre. Pope Sylvester appointed Friday to be observed as a day of fasting in memory of our Lord's passion. Pope Honorius III. ordered, that when Christmas day happened on a Friday, they should feast and rejoice, and not fast. Pope Urban VI. appointed that the eves of the three feasts attributed to the Virgin Mary should be fasted on, viz. the Visitation, the Assumption, and Nativity *; but Irenæus says, that some fasted one day only, some two days, some more in the time of Lent, and it was in his time that the unity of faith was well maintained, notwithstanding this variety †. Would you know the reason why fish is permitted to be eaten on fast-days, Durandus has informed us ‡, viz. because God never cursed the waters; because the remission of sins is promised to water-baptism, and the spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters. The Popes of Rome require all Christians to observe the fasts according to the practice of the church of Rome, and have declared a violation a mortal sin, reserving however to themselves the power of granting dispensations to as many as can pay well for them.

* See this more fully in the History of Popery, vol. I. page 100.

† Eusebius, lib. v. cap. 26.

‡ Durandus's Rationale, lib. vi.

*Of EXORCISMS and BENEDICTIONS, of Blessings of
Creatures in the Catholic Church, and of the Use of
Holy-Water.*

Q. What do you mean by exorcisms ?

A. The rites and prayers instituted by the church for the casting out devils, or restraining them from hurting persons, disquieting places, or abusing any of God's creatures to our harm.

Q. What is the meaning of blessing so many things in the Catholic church ?

A. We bless churches and other places set aside for divine service, altars, chalices, vestments, &c. by way of devoting them to holy uses. We bless our meats, and other inanimate things, which God has given us for our use, that we may use them with moderation in a manner agreeable to God's institution ; that they may be serviceable to us, and that the devil may have no power to abuse them to our prejudice. We bless candles, salt, water, &c. by way of begging of God that such as religiously use them may obtain blessings, &c.

Of the Exorcism of SALT.

I exorcise thee, O creature of salt, by the living God, by the true God, by the holy God, by that God who, by the prophet Elisha, commanded thee to be cast into the water, to cure its barrenness, that thou mayest by this exorcism be made beneficial to the faithful, and become to all them that make use of thee, healthful both to soul and body ; and that in what place soever thou shall be sprinkled, all illusions and wickedness, and crafty wiles of Satan, may be chased away, and depart from that place ; and every unclean spirit commanded in his name, who
is

is to come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. *Amen.*

Of the Exorcism of the WATER.

I exorcise thee, O creature of water, in the name of God, the Father Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy Ghost, that thou mayest by this exorcism have power to chase away all the power of the enemy; that thou mayest be enabled to cast him out, and put him to flight with all his apostate angels, by virtue of the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who is to come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. *Amen.*

Then the priest mingles the salt with the water, saying,

May the salt and water be mixed together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Q. But does it not favour of superstition to attribute any virtue to such inanimate things as blessed candles, holy water, *Agnus Dei's*, &c.

A. It is no superstition to look for a good effect from the prayers of the church of God, and it is in virtue of these prayers that we hope for benefit from these things, when used with faith, and daily experience shews us that our hopes are not vain.

Q. What do you mean by *Agnus Dei's*?

A. Wax stamped with the image of the lamb of God, blessed by the Pope with solemn prayers, and anointed with the holy chrism *.

Of the great VARIETY of their Religious Orders and Societies of PRIESTS.

These seem, says Dr. Middleton, to be formed upon the plan of the old colleges or fraternities of the

* Catholic Christian, page 257.

augurs, pontifices, salii, fratres aruales, &c. The vestal virgins might furnish the hint for the foundation of nunneries; and I hence observed, says he, something very like to the rules and austerities of the monastic life in the character and manner of several priests of the heathens; but above all in the old descriptions of the lazy mendicant priests among the heathens, who used to travel with bags on their backs, and raise contributions of money, bread and wine; wherein we see the very picture of their begging friars, who are always about the streets in the same habit, and on the same errand*.

Cicero, in his book of laws, restrains the practice of begging alms to one particular order of priests, and that only on certain days; because, as he says, it propagates superstition, and impoverishes families, which plainly discovers the policy of the church of Rome in the great care that they have taken to multiply their begging orders.

Of WASHING the Feet of the Poor.

The Pope and Cardinals being come to the ducal wall, where the ceremony of washing the feet is to be performed, the cardinal deacon assistants clothe his holiness with his purple, stole, his red cope, and plain mitre. Their nunneries are clothed in purple copes, and his holiness puts three spoonfuls of odorous spices into the thurible, and gives his blessing to the cardinal deacon who is to sing the gospel; after which one of the apostolical subdeacons gives the Pope a book of the New Testament to kiss, and the cardinal deacon incenses him three times; immediately after a chorus of musicians sing these words, *A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another*; then the Pope takes off his cope, and putting on a white apron, washes the feet of thirteen poor

* Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 220.

priest strangers, who sit on a high form or bench, cloathed in white camblet, with a kind of coul that reaches down to the middle of the arm. They are first washed clean with soap before they are presented to him to wash, and he then washes them, and then the *major domo* presents them a napkin, and the Pope's treasurer presents them with two medals, one of gold, and the other of silver; then the Pope returns to his seat, and washes his hands, and then they sing the Lord's prayer, and other prayers in Latin. The magistrates of Rome are present at this ceremony, which ends with a sumptuous entertainment. This practice of washing the poors feet is solemnised on Holy Thursday by all the princes of the Romish religion in Europe.---In France the king's chief physician makes choice of twelve children for that purpose, whose feet are washed by his majesty, and he himself serves up the dishes; they are afterwards presented, in the King's name, with money, bread, and cloaths.---The king of Spain performs this ceremony in his antichamber, after having performed his devotions at chapel; and after the service is over an entertainment follows for the accommodation of many poor. Cloathing is likewise distributed, and then the chief almoner pronounces a blessing *.

Of BOWING at the Name of JESUS.

This custom appears to have had its rise about the seventh century. The church of Rome probably borrowed is from the Pagans or Mahomedans; the former indeed not only bowed their body, but fell down prostrate, or upon their knees, before their idols. The latter more nearly resemble this custom; for when an *Iman* pronounces the name of *Mahomed*, the Turks bow down their heads to express the vene-

* Aimon of Ceremonies, cited by Picart, vol. II. page 21, 22.

ration they have for the founder of their religion. From those authorities, Monsieur Picart says, as for bowing the body, or only the head, it hath ever been practised in religious worship, as being a natural demonstration of the respect which we owe to the Almighty, but do not attempt to assign any reason why the custom of bowing at the name of Jesus was introduced, and not at the mention of the name of God, or why it is to be most solemnly complied with in the recital of the creed *.

*Of BURNING LAMPS and WAX TAPERS before the
Shrines and Images of their Saints.*

No sooner do one enter their churches, than the eye is attracted by a number of lamps and wax-candles, which are constantly burning before the shrines and images of their saints. In all the great churches of Italy, says Mabillon, they hang up lamps at every altar. The primitive writers frequently expose the folly and absurdity of this heathenish custom; they light up candles to God, says Lactantius, as if he lived in the dark; and do not they deserve to pass for madmen, who offer lamps to the author and giver of light? But this is a piece of zeal which continues still the same in modern Rome, where each church abounds with lamps of massy silver, the gifts of princes and other persons of distinction; and it is surprising to see how great a number of this kind are perpetually kept burning before the altars of their principal saints or images, as St. Antony of Padua, or the lady of Loretta, as well as the vast profusion of wax-candles with which their churches are illuminated on every great festival, when the high altar,

* Picart's Dissertation on Religious Worship, vol. I. page 16. This practice was disavowed by the Waldenses in the eleventh century, and by the Lutherans, according to Brentius's Declaration, cited by Mr. Hickman, Apol. page 109.

covered with gold and silver plate, disposed in beautiful figures, and stuck full of wax-lights, looks more like the rich side-board of some great Prince; than an altar to pay divine worship at.

Of VOTIVE Offerings.

There is another thing almost equally remarkable as the number of lamps and wax-lights, viz. the number of offerings, or votive gifts, which hang round their altars in consequence of vows made in time of danger, and in gratitude for deliverance, and cures wrought in sickness or distress; a practice so common among the Heathens, that no one custom of antiquity is so frequently mentioned by all their writers; a piece of superstition so beneficial to the priesthood, that it could not fail of being taken into the scheme of the Romish church, where it reigns to this day in so gross a manner as to give scandal and offence even to some of their own communion; there being so great a number of them hanging up in their churches, that, instead of adding beauty, they really hinder us from observing the sight of more beautiful ornamented parts. These offerings are sometimes little figures in wood or wax, but especially pieces of board painted; sometimes indeed fine pictures, describing the manner of the deliverance obtained by the miraculous interposition of the saint invoked; so that one of them said, it might reasonably be questioned whether we imitate the religion or the superstition of our ancestors*.

Of INCENSE.

In some of the principal churches of Rome, where you have before you in one view a great number of altars, and all of them smoking at once with streams of incense, that one would imagine one's self transported into the

* See Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 149.

temple of some Heathen deity. Under the Pagan emperors, the use of incense for any purpose of religion was thought so contrary to the obligations of christianity, that in their persecutions the very method of trying and convicting a Christian was by requiring him only to throw some grains of it into the censor. Under the Christian emperors it not only was looked upon as a rite so peculiarly heathenish, that the very places or houses where it could be proved to have been done were by a law of Theodosius confiscated to the government; but at present, in the church of Rome, there is always a boy in a surplice waiting on the priest at the altar, with the sacred utensils, and among the rest with a vessel of incense, with many strange motions, crossings, &c. as it is smoaking around and over the altar *.

Of HOLY WATER.

Sprinkling Holy Water by the priest on solemn days, and used likewise by every one going in or out of a church, by dipping a finger in a basin or vessel for that purpose, and therewith crossing himself; is a custom borrowed from the Heathens. Platina, in his history of the Popes, ascribes the institution of this Holy Water to Alexander the First; but that does not appear true, because we find the primitive Fathers speaking of it as a custom purely heathenish, and condemning it as impious and detestable. Justin Martyr says, it was invented by dæmons. However, the Roman Catholic church adopt the use of holy water, on pretence of securing mankind against the delusions of the devil, and many of their learned writers reckon up several virtues and benefits derived from the use of it, both to the soul and the body, and to assert the attestation of the same by miracles. This holy water is nothing more than a mixture of salt, with common

* Middleton's Letters from Rome, p. 135.

water, and blessing it by the priest. Middleton's letters from Rome, p. 136, & seq. Where he likewise quotes his authorities.

Of the CANONIZATION of Saints.

As to the proof of miracles, which is essential to these canonizations, every one will conceive how easy it must be in a function contrived to serve the interest of the church, and the ambition of its rulers, to procure such a testimonial of them as will be sufficient for the purpose.

In the college of St. Omer's, says Dr. Middleton, the father who shewed us the house produced some relicks of Thomas Becket, who is worshipped as a great saint in that church; and notwithstanding he was a prelate of a most daring, turbulent, seditious spirit, ambitious and insolent, and guilty of the highest ingratitude to the King, traiterously endeavouring to excite the King of France and the court of Flanders to enter into a war with his King and country, and when he was cited by the King and Barons to answer for his mal-administrations, he absolutely refused to appear, declaring himself responsible to none but God and the Pope; yet this man is now adored as one of the principal saints and martyrs of the Romish church, whose character, he says, he had chosen to give, as an illustrious example from our own history, what kind of merit it is that has exalted so many others in the same church to the same honours; and he challenges Catholics to tell what opinion their church entertains of Garnet the jesuit, who was privy to the gun-powder plot, and suffered for his treason; and he must say they declare him to be a saint, and martyr of Christ, for such he is held to be at Rome and St. Omer's*.

* Dr. Middleton's Prefatory Discourse, p. 75.

This author adds, that the canonization of saints is become as common almost as the creation of cardinals, there having seldom been a Pope who did not add some to the calendar. Benedict XIII. canonized eight in one summer, Clement XII. four, and there is seldom any pretence wanting for supplying fresh saints, when it gratifies the ambition of the Pope, or other Princes of that communion, or some of their name and family.

Of PROCESSIONS made to St. Peter's Church in the Time of Lent.

It was a remarkable part of the Heathen superstition, that, on some particular days, they had processions in honour of the God whose festival they were celebrating, wherein they were attended by priests in surplices, with wax-candles in their hands, carrying upon a pageant the images of their Gods; according to the account of *Apuleius* and others.

Monsieur *Tournefort*, in his travels through Greece, reflects upon the Greek church for having retained in their worship many of the rites of heathenism: But the reflection was full as applicable to his own as to the Greek church, in the very instance of carrying about the pictures of their saints, as the Pagans did those of their Gods.

Thus, says our author Dr. Middleton, in one of those processions lately made to St. Peter's in the time of Lent, I saw that ridiculous penance of the flagellantes, or self-whippers, who march with whips in their hands, and lash themselves on the bare back till they bled, in the same manner as the fanatical priests of Bellona used to cut and slash themselves of old, in order to please that Goddess.

And in the Romish church they have another exercise of the same kind, and in the season of Lent; for, on a certain day appointed annually for this discipline,

cipline, men of all conditions assemble themselves towards the evening in one of the churches of the city, where whips or lashes made of cords are distributed to every person present; and after they are all served, and a short office of devotion performed, the candles being put out upon the warning of a little bell, the whole company begin presently to strip themselves, and exercise their whips on their own backs for about an hour, till, fatiated with being their self-tormentors, they put on their cloaths, and at the tinkling of a little bell they appear again in their proper dress *.

Of the BENEDICTION of the Pontifical Robes.

This benediction cannot be performed but by a Bishop, unless he directs that a priest should officiate in his stead; but whoever performs it must be dressed in a surplice with the stole over it, of a colour suitable to the day. The benediction differs in no respect from any of the foregoing, and is given by the light of tapers with the sprinkling of holy water and a few prayers, which may be seen in the ritual; all the robes from the mitre down to the sandals receive the same benediction.

Of the BENEDICTION of those who are appointed for the Holy War.

When the bishop blesses the new warrior, he gives him a sword, blessed before by his lordship by the sprinkling of the holy water. In giving him the sword, he exhorts him to employ it against the enemies of the church, and true religion; then it is sheathed, and the bishop himself girds it upon him, the soldier all this time upon his knees, then gets up, draws it, flourishes it twice in the air, and brings it over his left

* Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, p. 191.

arm; then the bishop takes the sword, and gives him three gentle blows, and then gives him the kiss of peace, and a second time gives him his benediction, and then the person kisses his lordship's hand, and goes home in peace.

Of the BENEDICTION of IMAGES.

It was prohibited by the decrees of the council of Trent, to erect any extraordinary and unusual images in churches, without the bishop's licence and approbation first had and obtained; and they proceed to the benediction or consecration of an image, in the same manner as to that of a new cross; while the prayer is saying, the saint whom the image represents is named, and after that the sprinkler is taken, and the priest to conclude the consecration sprinkles the image with holy water; but when any image of the Virgin Mary is blessed, it is incensed three times as well as sprinkled, to which are added an *Ave Maria*, some psalms and anthems, the prayer beginning *Deus qui Virginitatem aulam, &c.* The anthem, *O gloriosa Dei Genetrix*, the magnificat, &c. A double sign of the cross, made with the priest's right hand, concludes the ceremony *. See the consecration of public and private crosses, p. 229.

The BENEDICTION of Bells.

The ceremony of blessing bells, is by the Catholics called christening of them, because the name of some of the saints is ascribed to them †, by virtue of whose invocation they are presented, in order that they may obtain his favour and protection. The benediction devotes them to God's service, that he may confer on them the power not barely of striking the ear, but of touching the heart, by the influence of the Holy Ghost;

* Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p. 355, who quotes *Piscara Praxis* Cer. lib. ii. sect. 12. chap. iii.

† Pope John XIII. first baptised Bells, cent x.

when

when they are thus blessed and rung out, they contribute very much towards the priest's success in his exorcisms, &c. It is the bishop's peculiar province to perform this ceremony. For the method of casting, of consecration, perfuming, with other ceremonies, we refer the reader to Picart's edition of their ceremonies, vol. I. p. 353.

Lest we should be thought too tedious in this part of our history, we have purposely omitted, or but slightly treated of several of the distinguishing doctrines, practices, and ceremonies, of the church of Rome, as the celibacy of the clergy, the distinction between mortal and venial sins, auricular confessions, the feasts and festivals, according to the Roman calendar, excommunications on Holy Thursday, the custom of wearing relicks, as a part of the table-cloth (as it is pretended) that was laid when our Lord instituted his last supper, or part of the napkin with which he wiped his disciples feet, as a remedy against divers diseases.

The ceremonies of the Pope's coronation, the lent stations, strewing of ashes, carnival lent, ember week, Passion-week, Palm Sunday, &c. of uncovering the chalice at the altar, of the procession of the host to the grave, adoration of our Saviour's shroud.

The consecration of the altar, of the oil and vessels, blessing the new fire, the benediction of altar cloths and linen, the corporals and tabernacles, of the pix, ciborium, paten, and chalice, with other decorations of the altar, and a variety of other ceremonies, on which they lay no small stress, and on which Protestants differ in their opinions and practice.

History of the GREEK Church.

THE Greek church may (at least) for several centuries be considered as a part of the Roman church, having the same apostolical foundation (nay, the church of Jerusalem was established by the apostles much

† Allot's Ritual. Picart, p. 353.

earlier than that of Rome) and the bishops maintained a reciprocal regard for and communion with each other, were united in some general councils, and held the unity of faith in the most important articles, notwithstanding some difference in sentiment; but it must be acknowledged, that, as early as the second century, they were divided as to the time (and the obligation) of celebrating Easter. They likewise adhered pretty much to the doctrine of *Arius*, acknowledged the supremacy of the Father to the Son; and as it was the custom of many of the bishops to draw up a creed for his own church, most of their articles were conformable to the canons and creed called the apostles, which in substance is of the greatest antiquity; and did also admit of the Nicene creed, drawn up A. D. 318: but in process of time the Nicene creed was new-modelled by the general council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, when that part of it relating to the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father was rejected by them, and from this time we find some unchristian animosity subsisted between the eastern and western churches, each censuring and anathematizing each other. Many points merely speculative distracted and divided the churches, pelagianism, and the authority of particular councils, &c. and these not only continued, but increased to the sixth century; councils convened in the east, in opposition to those in the west; the remarkable disputes (before mentioned) called the three chapters, and about the corruptibility or incorruptibility of the body of Jesus Christ, and whether we may or ought to say that one of the *Trinity* suffered, upon which many of the eastern churches separated in their communion from the church of Rome; and it is certain the Greek church made some good regulations.

In the seventh century they convened a council, which fixed the discipline of the Greek church, made 102 canons, or ecclesiastical laws, although they were never

never received in the west, approving the canonical letters of St. Basil, appointed the mysteries of the sacrament to be received fasting; they gave the sacrament in both kinds; mixed water with wine; forbade the eating cheese or eggs in Lent, that there should be no fasting on Saturdays, and prohibited the eating of blood.

Other matters of dispute contributed to widen their difference; and in the ninth century there was a contest between the Pope of Rome, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, about Bulgaria. The Pope's legates affirmed it belonged to the Pope, and that the Bulgarians ought to submit themselves to the church of Rome. The eastern patriarchs asserted, that Bulgaria having been taken from the Greeks, and formerly governed by Greek bishops, ought to be subject to the patriarch of Constantinople: the Emperor likewise favoured the patriarch's party, and a division consequently ensued, A.D. 878. The Greeks soon after preferred ten articles of accusation against the Latins; the first was against the procession of the Holy Ghost; the Greeks denying that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, and asserted his proceeding from the Father only. They found fault with the Latins for not having eight weeks in their Lent, with the Latin priests shaving their beards, with their being obliged to celibacy, with their forbidding to anoint with the holy chrism the foreheads of those they baptised. They charged them with making bishops of deacons, without first conferring on them the order of priest; they opposed the primacy of Rome, and would have preferred the Patriarchs of Constantinople, or at least made them equal; they likewise charged the Latins with making the holy chrism with river water, and with offering a lamb at Easter, together with the body and blood of Christ, after the manner of the Jews.

From

From this time we may with some propriety consider the *Greek church* as distinct from the church of Rome, notwithstanding so great an agreement as there subsists between the eastern and western churches, both in their principles and practices, especially as the constitution of the Greek church differs from that of Rome.

The Greek church, according to their original constitution, is governed by four patriarchs, viz. those of Alexandria, of Jerusalem, of Antioch, and of Constantinople; the latter of which assumes to himself the title of *Universal*, or *Oecumenical* Patriarch, on account of his residing in the imperial city, and having a larger jurisdiction than the rest. This title was confirmed by a council convened in that capital in the year 518. This Patriarch likewise assumes the title of holiness, in the abstract; and Cyril Lucar, at the beginning of one of his letters, assumes the title of oecumenical judge of the Christian churches dependant on the imperial throne of Constantinople*.

The Emperor of the Turks may indeed with truth be stiled the supreme head of the Greek church, as the Patriarch himself, the bishops, &c. are obliged to procure his letters-patent before they can act in their respective functions.

The following is a SUMMARY of the BELIEF and PRACTICE of the GREEK CHURCH.

I. They believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible.

II. In one lord *Jesus Christ*, the only begotten son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of Gods, light of lights; very God of very God, begotten, not made, being one substance with the Father,

* See *Sieur Aymon's authentic Memoirs.*

by whom all things were made: who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the *Holy Ghost* of the *Virgin Mary*, and was made man, and was crucified for us; also under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried, (or descended into the grave) and the third day he rose again according to the scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right-hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

III. That the *Holy Ghost* proceeds only from the Father, not from the son; yet they believe him to be God.

IV. They do not acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, nor infallibility, nor consequently that the church of Rome is the true mother-church; they even prefer their own to that of Rome, as the most apostolical; and on Holy Thursday excommunicate the Pope, and all the Latin prelates, as heretics and schismatics.

V. They believe no other sacraments than baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism they perform, by dipping the person three times under water distinctly, at the name of the FATHER, the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. They use a kind of anointing, crossing, &c. in baptism. They baptise infants, and have one godfather or godmother, according to the sex of the child. But baptism is often deferred by them, till their children are five, ten, or fifteen years of age, or longer, and they rebaptise all the Latins who are admitted to their communion.

VI. That the Lord's supper ought to be administered in both kinds, even to infants, before they can be capable of distinguishing the spiritual food from any other. The laity are indispenibly obliged to receive the sacrament in both kinds. They seal the bread in the eucharist with the form of a cross. Their bread is leavened. They receive both the bread and wine together in a spoon, from the hands of a priest, and always fasting. Whether they acknowledge transubstantiation or not, which is disputed, they pay a superstitious
veneration

vation to their consecrated bread. They do not indeed carry it in procession, but after the priest has consecrated it, he elevates it, and says, *Thou art my God; thou art my King, I adore thee; Lord have mercy upon me, miserable sinner*, and in the whole of this service are extremely superstitious.

VII. They exclude confession, confirmation, extreme unction, and matrimony, from being sacraments. Though they recommend a confession four times a year; yet they deny that auricular confession is a divine precept, and at best regard it only as an injunction of the church, and insist that it ought always to be free and voluntary; but is in no wise necessary to make a full discovery of all their sins, or of all the circumstances attending them.

VIII. Confirmation is administered immediately after baptism. This has always been esteemed by them a part of the priest's office, and is not deferred to be performed by a bishop, in any of the Greek churches.

IX. Extreme unction, as used by the Papists, is practised in some degree; but they disclaim that name, or calling it a sacrament: the Greeks administer it to all sick persons, and as often as a person in such circumstances might desire it, without waiting till the person is at the point of death.

X. They maintain likewise, that matrimony is no sacrament; but, on the contrary, an union that may be dissolved, and that, in the case of adultery, or other provocations, it may be lawful to separate. Their priests are equally approved, if married before the taking holy orders; but they don't indulge them in that respect afterwards. They think marriage a fourth time unlawful. They deny that fornication is a mortal sin.

XI. Though they disbelieve the notion of purgatory, they offer up prayers for the dead. The words of their office, translated, run thus, "Grant, O Lord, that his soul may be at rest, in those mansions of light, consolation

tion and repose, from whence all grief and sorrow are for ever excluded."

XII. They are divided as to their sentiments of hell, as of a different nature and duration. They, in general, favour the notion, that the torments of hell will not be eternal.

XIII. The Greeks, and all the eastern nations in general, are of opinion, that departed souls will not be immediately and perfectly happy; that the first Paradise will be a state of repose, and the next of eternal felicity.

XIV. They enjoin the observation of diverse fasts and festivals: they have four lents; the first begins on the fourteenth of November; the second, the great lent before Easter; the third, the week after Pentecost; and the fourth, on the first of August. At these times they eat nothing that has blood, or oil, nor milk-meats, but herbs, and shell-fish, and are so extremely superstitious, that they scarce allow an egg or flesh-broth to a sick person. Yet they disdain the Latins for their observations of the vigils before the nativity of Christ, and the festivals of the Virgin Mary and the apostles, as well as for their fasting in Ember-Week; they prohibit all fasting on Saturdays, except on the Saturday preceding Easter.

XV. They strictly abstain from eating such things as have been strangled, and such other meats as are prohibited in the *Old Testament*.

XVI. They reject the religious use of graven images, and statues, although they admit of pictures in their churches, and have a great veneration for them.

XVII. They worship angels, and pray to the Virgin Mary, pray and sing hymns to the saints, and are very superstitious in the histories of them.

XVIII. They attend prayers, morning and evening, and enjoin prayers for Kings, and all civil and ecclesiastical magistrates, and for the conversion of schismatics and heretics.

XIX. They

XIX. They enjoin obedience and honour to the priest;

XX. They forbid the laity to invade the rights and benefits of the clergy, and all kinds of sacrilegious acts.

XXI. They forbid marrying in Lent, or on other fasts.

XXII. They prohibit the frequenting theatres, and other Gentile customs.

XXIII. They forbid the laity to read the books of heretics.

XXIV. Though they reject the Apocrypha, as being uncanonical; yet they hold some traditions of equal authority with the scripture; and greatly venerate the writings of Basil, Chrysostom, Damascene, &c.

XXV. Of all the general councils that have been held in the Catholic church by the Popes at different times, they pay no regard to any after the sixth; and reject the seventh, which was the second held at Nice.

XXVI. Their excommunications are often made on very frivolous occasions.

XXVII. They hold justification by faith and works conjointly.

XXVIII. They deny that the office of subdeacon is at present an holy order.

XXIX. They have a great number of monks, all of St. Basil's order; these have their abbots. The patriarch, Metropolitian, and bishops, are of this order.

XXX. They have four liturgies or masses; St. James's, St. Chrysostom, St. Basil's, (which they principally esteem) and Gregory the Great, which last is used by the Latins, and they celebrate the mass in the old Greek tongue*.

* Notwithstanding from the preceeding articles it appears, that the constitution and doctrine of the Greek church is in some respects modelled more agreeable to scripture than the church of Rome; yet their extreme superstition in the observation of their Lents, in the performance of the sacraments, their consecrated places, vestments, utensils, and even the hollowed ground, shew they come very little behind the church of Rome in superstitious ceremonies.

The ARTICLES OF FAITH of the FRENCH or GALLICAN CHURCH.*

The French church, by acknowledging the Pope's supremacy, and by persevering inflexibly in the principles, and (with very little exception) to the numerous train of superstitious ceremonies of that holy mother church, may be considered as one of her perfectly obedient sons. It is true, the French nation soon perceived, that the Pope's claim was unlimited, and would affect not only the royal prerogative, but the liberty and property of his subjects; and therefore, in the eleventh century, the French King not only objected to, but refused compliance with some claims of the Pope relating to the right of conferring benefices. And though this dispute, in the close of the twelfth century, between Boniface VIII. and Philip I. King of France, produced some dreadful effects, the French never lost sight of their point, but asserted the King's prerogative to what was called the regale; and in the fifteenth century, when the council of Trent had established the authority of the Pope, in opposition to the prerogative of the King of France, he ordered his ambassadors to protest against it; and in the year 1680, when Pope Innocent XI. seemed determined to oppose his right, there was held a national council of the clergy to regulate this dispute, who confirmed his right of the regale over all the churches of the kingdom. Yet soon after Lewis XIV. to discover his superstitious veneration of the Pope, and his bigotted attachment to the persecuting spirit of popery, or in compliance to the Pope, repealed the edict of Nantz, and banished his Protestant subjects, or treated them with cruel severities.

* This term is very antient, for we find it in the council of Paris, held in the year 362; by it is understood the body of French Roman Catholics. See p. 118.

But notwithstanding the acknowledged supremacy of the Pope in spirituals, the French church differs in some respects in its constitution, privileges, liberties, &c. for this church has all along preserved certain antient rights, that she has possessed almost time immemorial, neither are these privileges any grants of Popes, but certain franchises and immunities derived to her from her first original, and which she has taken care never to relinquish.

The following articles point out wherein they consist.

I. The King of France has a right to convene synods, or provincial and national councils.

II. The Pope's legates (*à latere*) are never admitted into France, unless with the approbation and allowance of the King.

III. The legate of Avignon cannot exercise his commission in any of his Majesty's dominions, till after he has obtained the King's leave for that purpose.

IV. The prelates of the Gallican church, being summoned by the Pope, cannot depart the realm upon any pretence whatsoever, without the King's permission.

V. The Pope has no authority to levy any tax or imposition upon the ecclesiastical preferments, upon any pretence either of loan, vacancy, annates, tythes, procurations, or otherwise, without the King's order, and the consent of the clergy.

VI. The Pope has no authority to depose the King, or grant away his dominions to any person whomsoever. His holiness can neither excommunicate the King, nor absolve any of his subjects from their allegiance.

VII. The Pope likewise has no authority to excommunicate the King's officers, for the executing and discharging their respective offices and functions.

VIII. The Pope has no right to take cognizance, either by himself or his delegates, of any pre-eminences, or privileges, belonging to the crown of France, the

King

King being not obliged to argue his prerogatives in any court but his own.

IX. Counts Palatine made by the Pope, are not acknowledged as such in France.

X. The Pope cannot grant licences to churchmen; the King's subjects, to bequeathe the issue of their respective preferments, contrary to the laws of the King, and customs of the realm.

XI. The Pope cannot grant a dispensation to enjoy any estate, or revenues in France, without the King's consent.

XII. The Pope cannot grant a licence to ecclesiastics, to alienate church-lands, situate and lying in France, without the King's consent.

XIII. The King may punish his ecclesiastical officers for misbehaviour in their respective charges, notwithstanding the privilege of their orders.

XIV. No person has any right to hold any benefice in France, unless he be a native, or is naturalized by the King, or has a dispensation for that purpose.

XV. The Pope is not superior to an œcumenical, or general council.

XVI. The Gallican church does not receive, without any distinction, all the canons, and all the decretal epistles, but keeps to that antient collection, called *Corpus Canonicum*, which Pope Adrian sent to *Charlemagne*, towards the end of the eighth century, under the pontificate of Nicholas I. the French bishops likewise declaring it to be the only canon law, wherein their liberty consists.

XVII. The Pope has no power to dispense with the law of God, the law of Nature, or these antient canons.

XVIII. The regulations of the Apostolic chamber, or court, are not obligatory on the Gallican church, unless confirmed by the King's edicts.

XIX. If a Frenchman makes application for a benefice, lying in France, his holiness is obliged to give

him an instrument, under the seal of his office ; and, in case of refusal, the parliament of Paris can give orders to the bishop of that diocese to give him institution ; which institution will be of equal validity with the Pope's.

XX. It is only by sufferance that the Pope has what they call a right of collating to benefices in France.

These liberties are esteemed inviolable, and the French Kings, at their coronation, solemnly swear to preserve and maintain them.

As the Gallican church, with respect to the authority of the civil power, is exempt from that absolute subjection to the Pope of Rome, which other nations in Europe are under to him, it is no wonder if their government, in church as well as state, somewhat differ ; so that we find the cruelties of the inquisition has not yet had any footing in France ; though it must be owned the French have given too many proofs of a similar deportment to the mother-church, by many instances of cruel persecutions for conscience sake, as well by suppressing the liberty of free enquiry in matters of religion, as by the many superstitious rites and ceremonies of her worship. It shews it is no other than Rome papal. The mass is solemnized with all the magnificence and ceremony as at Rome, and attendance of persons of all ranks enjoined under various penalties ; the confession to priests acknowledged of necessity to salvation ; the procession of the host through the streets of Paris is attended with great formality, and at its approach foreigners as well as natives are required to pay a superstitious respect to it, &c. *

* Broughton's Dictionary.



C H A P. III.

*Of the State of KNOWLEDGE and RELIGION in BRITAIN;
more particularly from the first Propagation, and conse-
quent ESTABLISHMENT of CHRISTIANITY, to the Com-
mencement of the Reign of WILLIAM the CONQUEROR,
1066.*

WE shall now take a retrospective view of those dark and barbarous ages of the world, when paganism and the grossest idolatry had overspread these isles, and succinctly point out some remarkable occurrences and circumstances that intervened, and at length made way for the introduction and prevalence of Christianity, though for a long time after incumbered with a variety of Romish superstitions.

The antient inhabitants of Britain, not only at first settling here, but for a considerable time, were in a state of ignorance and barbarity; nor indeed could it from the nature of things be otherwise, unless countries should happen to be peopled by large colonies from societies that have already arrived to a considerable proficiency of knowledge and government, which could not possibly be the case in early periods. The persons who originally settled in these remote parts of Europe, being rude and unpolished themselves, were able to carry nothing along with them but their own savage manners, and their own gross conceptions.

The first inhabitants of an uncultivated region generally apply themselves to such employments and exercises as the want of provision may urge them to; probably to hunting as the most speedy means of subsistence; the next stage is pasturage, and a third agriculture; the last step is regulated governments: all these

must, as it were, make way for the introduction of knowledge, the truest source of religion.

Though England might be peopled several centuries before the first accounts we have of it, yet the barbarous condition in which we perceive it to have been; is no more than might reasonably be expected. At the time when Cæsar invaded the island, even husbandry itself does not seem to have been universally followed: our ancestors however do not appear to have been without some skill in war; for tho' in this respect they were greatly inferior to the Romans, yet they conducted their opposition to Cæsar in a manner that redounds highly to their credit, considering the amazing abilities of that general, and the excellent discipline of his army. Ambition and resentment seemed at this time to have gained the ascendancy of their reason and humanity; that they had brought the wretched arts of mutual destruction much sooner to perfection than those which refine the soul, and are cultivated to adorn, improve, and bless society. To rectify this great disorder and unhappiness, some persons were pretty early distinguished, by a superior penetration into the difference of principles and actions, whose dispositions likewise led them to compassionate the unhappy state of mankind at that time, so far sunk in ignorance and barbarism. Some of the first thus distinguished and employed, famous in history, were the *Druids* *.

*History of the
Druids.* The DRUIDS, according to the general history of them, we are apt to look upon as persons of very extraordinary accomplishments. This deception has been assisted by our poets, who have spread a glory round them, and have painted them in a manner that disposes us to regard them as almost divine. No one has more charmingly contributed to carry on the delusion than the ingenious and elegant Mason, in his *Character*. But if we re-

* Rapin's Hist. translated by Lidiard, Introd. p. 10.

duce our ideas to the test of sober reason, we shall not find much in the Druids that was particularly excellent and valuable. They were the priests of the time, and, like other priests, had address and subtilty enough to acquire a vast authority, and to keep the people in absolute subjection. They were likewise magistrates as well as priests, and had the determination of civil causes; a circumstance which was the natural effect, both of their superior quality, and superior knowledge; for what knowledge then prevailed, was principally confined to them. However, the remains we have of the Druids do not give us a very high opinion of the progress they had made, though undoubtedly they went far beyond the rest of their countrymen, and it is probable that individuals among them might be men of great wisdom.

They entertained the notion of transmigration; a notion which has spread from the farthest east to the remotest west, and which has been so widely embraced, that a philosophical person cannot help looking on this fact as a singular phenomenon in the history of human nature, and imagine that either there is something in it very natural to the unenlightened mind of man, or that it proceeded from an antient and general tradition. The best principles advanced by the Druids were, that the Deity is one, and infinite, and that his worship ought not to be confined within walls; that all things derive their origin from heaven; that the soul is immortal; and that children should be educated with the utmost care. But their prodigious veneration for the mistletoe, and the great effects they attributed to it, their opinion that the moon is a sovereign remedy for diseases, with others of their sentiments and customs, shewed a strong superstition; as their prohibiting an intercourse with strangers, if not merely a political law, testified a savageness of manners; and their allowance, nay, command, of human sacrifices carries in it the evidence of the most

shocking cruelty. In truth, they were little more than the barbarous priests of a barbarous and unlettered people. Their knowledge is said to have reached to physics, to the mathematics, to astronomy, and to medicine; but as it was never committed to writing, it could not be very extensive: indeed it chiefly consisted of the arcana of their doctrines and worship, and had a special relation to magic. Whatever their wisdom was, if we may give credit to the testimony of Cæsar, it was found here in greater perfection than in Gaul; from whence children were sent into Britain, to be instructed in the discipline of the Druids. The same author informs us, that it had its original in this country; but that is a circumstance much disputed.

There were likewise priests of an inferior order, called Bards, whose principal business was to celebrate the praises of the gods and departed heroes, in odes and verses, and to sing them to their harps, at their religious assemblies, public festivals, and private entertainments. These men were, in fact, the heralds, the chronologers, and the historians, as well as the poets of the land, for they kept up the memory of illustrious transactions; and by their compositions, which tradition handed down to posterity, they transmitted from age to age the names and characters of patriots and warriors *.

The divine *Homer* himself can be considered as no other than one of them, whose consummate excellency, and a number of circumstances, contributed to preserve his works from oblivion, and to raise him to the highest seat in the temple of Fame. Bards have been found in many countries, and continued in Scotland and Ireland nearly to our own time. As to the antient British ones, we have few remains of their productions; but we may venture to assert that many of them were truly valuable.

* Abstract from the Library, p. 73.

There was another order of persons called *Eubates*, who applied themselves to the contemplation of the works of nature, and the study of philosophy. What progress they then made, we have very little account of; but they rather seem to have had some wild notions in astrology, than any proper principles of philosophical knowledge, that might have improved their minds in the right knowledge of God, and the true principles of religion.

Such was the general state of things, till the island came under the dominion of the Cæsars, which may be considered as a new epocha in the history of the knowledge of antient Britain.

Whoever has a strong regard to the cause of freedom, can scarce avoid being filled with indignation, when he beholds the Romans spreading desolation and slaughter around them; wantonly subduing the nations of the earth, and unjustly depriving them of their liberty. But all this time, wherever they conquered, they were for polishing and reforming the manners of the inhabitants, and diffusing the knowledge of arts and sciences; though it must be owned, that, during the warm contests which subsisted between the Romans and the Britons, when the latter so gloriously, so bravely, though so unsuccessfully, struggled to maintain their independence, little progress could be made in literature: but when the country was peaceably settled into provinces, then civility began to spread itself, and knowledge more generally diffused, insomuch that many of the British nobles studied the Roman learning, and valued themselves on their magnificence and politeness, becoming pleased with what was in fact the badges of their slavery.

During this time there were, no doubt, schools of philosophy, and several eminent men; but who were most celebrated, or what sciences were most cultivated, we are not able to say, no traces of them being now

Roman Empire united in Theodosius, A. D. 387.

to be found. The confusion that succeeded destroyed all the remains of learning, and left a blank in this period which cannot be filled up.

But there is one event belonging to this A. D. 314. æra, which, besides its own immense importance in other views, comes more immediately under my notice, viz. the propagation of christianity in these isles. It is not necessary to inquire who was the person by whom the religion of Jesus was first preached, or the exact time when it was introduced; supposing we reject all conjectures of its being promulged by the apostles, or their immediate disciples, it is probable that it was very soon communicated to the Britons. It might be gaining ground, and spread greatly, before it received a civil establishment, as we are informed of many martyrs who witnessed to the truth, under the persecution raised by the Emperor Dioclesian, of whom St. Albion is reckoned the proto-martyr of North Britain; and from the days of Constantine the gospel would no doubt be much diffused, and generally embraced: accordingly we are assured, that three British bishops assisted at the council of Arles, A. D. 314. and subscribed the acts of that council. We read also that some of them were present at the council of Arminium in 359*.”

Now, so illustrious an event as the propagation of christianity in this country, could not take place without bringing along with it a mighty change in the state of knowledge; all those who embraced our holy religion were turned from gross idolatry and absurd superstition, to the belief and worship of one God. The reception of it was a vast acquisition of wisdom, as it contributed in many respects to expand the mind, and soften the manners of our ancestors; it would not in those simple times, when human reason was more imperfect than it now is, produce such noble and extended views of

* The Library, p. 75.

The History of the Church of Great Britain, p. 6.

things as we can at present attain, especially considering how soon errors and superstitions began to be mixed with the gospel; nevertheless it had not then been corrupted so much as it hereafter was; and during the purer ages it might greatly promote just and rational sentiments in general*.

What the particular state of religion was, it is difficult to ascertain; but we find doctrinal disputes agitated men in those days, as well as in succeeding periods. The notions of Arius are said to have been embraced in this country, and it is an undoubted fact, that Pelagianism was very prevalent. It was so prevalent as to occasion sharp controversies, and some bishops were sent over from Gaul to recover the Britons to the opposite opinions, though without any lasting success.

From about this time, when the Romans leave Britain, there arose a confused succession of British Kings, or rather petty tyrants, for twenty years†, till the year 445, when Vortigern is chosen King. He was originally chieftain of the Silures, settled in Radnorshire, and had acquired some reputation by his warlike achievements against the enemies of his country, tho' his martial genius by no means appeared at this juncture, when, instead of exerting the natural strength of the kingdom, which, if properly applied, would have been sufficient to secure it from the designs of the enemy, he placed his dependance upon foreign auxiliaries. By his weakness or knavery he betrayed his country into the hands of the Saxons, who had for a century and a half infested the coast of Britain to such a degree, that the Roman Emperors, from the reign of Dioclesian, maintained a considerable military force under the count of the Saxon shore, on purpose to se-

* Abstract from the Library, p. 76.

† Blair.

cure this island against the descents of those piratical adventurers†.

447 Vortigern, not a little agitated by his fears, which were the more predominant from a consciousness of his demerit, employed his emissaries to alarm the nobility with the exaggerated accounts of the strength, destination, and malevolence of their old enemies the Scots and Picts. Having thus artfully prepared their minds for the proposal, he summoned them to a general council, on pretence of deliberating on the necessity of the state, and there managed their passions with such dexterity, that they invested him with full power to invite the Saxons into England, and assign to them the isle of Thanet for their habitation.

452 The Saxons did not long remain inactive: Vortigern being pressed by his enemies from the north, they marched against the Scots and Picts, who had advanced as far as Stamford in Lincolnshire, when a battle ensued, in which the Saxons and Britons obtained a complete victory; after which the Saxons returned to the place of their destination, where they were supplied with food and raiment at the expence of Vortigern, who would have had no cause perhaps to repent of their arrival, which were only about 1500; but their own country being populous, and withal so barren, and the fertile lands of Britain so agreeable and alluring, that, in a very little time, they were reinforced with 5000 men, formed the ambitious view of becoming sole masters of England, and industriously fought an occasion of quarrel, and, after some struggles for victory, the last of which was an incur-
477 sion of the Saxons under Hengist and Esca, the Britons were defeated, and became the subjects of the Saxons. This was an event not only prejudicial in general to the liberties and properties of Britain, but to science and religion in particular. Vortigern was

† Smollet, p. 121.

Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. I. p. 61.

by this time become a contemptible partisan of the Saxons, and so immersed in vice and debauchery, that St. Germanus, deputy of the Gallican church in Britain, reprimanded him for his dissolute life; that he was anathematized in a council of the British clergy, and his subjects discharged of their allegiance.

And whatever the state of knowledge might be in this island before the introduction of the Saxons, it certainly received a great change for the worse at that period. The repeated invasions of those barbarians, the wars they raised, and the desolations they occasioned, spread a general confusion, dispersed the Britons to the remotest parts of the country, destroyed the monuments of learning, and left no room for the improvement and cultivation of the mind.

The few literary records we have, relate only to such persons as lived where the Saxons did not reach. The schools founded by Dubricius and Illutus in North Wales, produced several men whose names have been transmitted with honour to posterity; though in fact we are but little acquainted with their real attainments. Among these were Patrick and David, who exerted themselves much in preaching the gospel, and whom the superstition of latter ages hath advanced into tutelary saints, the first of Ireland, and the second of Wales. The monastery of Bangor was particularly famous for the education of youth. A number of scholars were brought up in it, who made some figure in their days; and among the rest Gildas, who wrote a treatise upon the destruction of Britain, and from whom we principally derive our information concerning the state of things during the latter end of the fifth, and part of the sixth century.

To the Saxons let us now direct our view, and, with respect to knowledge, we shall find them in a dismal situation. They were in the lowest condition of ignorance, rudeness, and barbarity; their religious worship consisted of the
History of the Saxons, and K. Ethelbert's conversion.
 grossest

grossest idolatry, and they sacrificed prisoners of war to the Gods. The first circumstance of any note among them, was, the reception of the gospel by Ethelbert, the King of Kent, and his subjects. His Queen Bertha, who was daughter or niece to Chilperic, King of Paris, and a Christian, had, together with Lindhard, a bishop, as it is said, of piety and learning, who attended her from France, prepared the way for this great event, by converting several persons, and by producing a favourable disposition in the mind of her husband. But the grand work was carried on by Austin, and other monks, sent by Pope Gregory from Rome. One thing in this affair deserves to be taken notice of, which is, that Ethelbert, whether it was owing to the good impressions of his lady, or the natural dictates of reason working in his own rude, but unprejudiced understanding, allowed to his people the utmost liberty of conscience. He treated the missionaries with respect, heard them with attention, and permitted them to propagate their doctrines without interruption; both before and after he had embraced christianity, he left his subjects to an entire freedom of judging and acting for themselves. His conversion, however, was followed by that of the whole nation; a fact the less to be wondered at, when we consider that the barbarians, having no settled sentiments, are in general ready to receive any which are offered by such as excel them in knowledge, and especially when encouraged by their own prince. This is confirmed by a variety of instances in the history of the world; for we shall almost always find, that the ignorant and unpolished conquerors of a civilized country submitted, without much hesitation, to the religion of the people they had subdued.

As to the change that was produced by Austin and his attendants in the principles and manners of the Saxons, it was not, to speak the most favourably of it, by any means so happy an alteration as would have been

been brought about, had the gospel been preached in purer ages. The truth at that age was mixed with so much error and superstition, that the understanding of our ancestors could not be so greatly enlarged, by the reception of christianity, as at first we might be apt to suppose; for, however upright the intentions of Austin might be, it is evident by many instances that he was a very weak man.

Austin, otherwise called Augustin, arrived in England in the year 591 as a simple monk and missionary; soon after which he was honoured with the Pope's pall, and created bishop of Canterbury. In this character he obtained no small influence over Ethelbert, and was the instrument of his conversion to christianity. He very soon after assumed the pomp and authority of a patriarchal metropolian, or apostle of the English nation. He was indeed consecrated as such at Arles, to which he made a voyage for that purpose; and at his return to Britain he sent Laurentius, with a monk called Peter, to make the Pope acquainted with the success of his labours, and desire his opinion and direction touching certain points relating to the behaviour of the bishops and clergy. His holiness having considered and replied to the questions, which with their answers may be seen in Bede's history of the church, sent over Melitus, Paulus, Justus, Melinus, and Rufinianus, to assist him in converting the Saxons; at the same time he transmitted directions about erecting sees among the new convents, with a pall for Augustin, which is an undyed piece of woollen cloth, laid upon St. Peter's tomb by the Pope's own hand, and worn over the shoulders by the metropolitans when they officiate. Augustin was likewise permitted by his master to convert the Pagan temples into Christian churches, after due purification, and to institute anniversary festivals of saints and consecrations, upon which the good people should build booths around those places of worship, kill oxen, eat, drink, and be merry, with

with moderation. A very singular indulgence, judiciously granted to the English, who were used to good cheer, and would not have at first relished the practice of fasting and other mortifications.

Some have asserted; that Austin and some others, with more probability than Paulinus, baptised ten thousand in one day. To which soever of them this fact is attributed, it is probable that these numerous conversions were too much like those since carried on by popish missionaries, and consisted more in a change of outward profession, than any real alteration of sentiments, dispositions, and manners. This is farther apparent from the Saxons being allowed to retain many of their Pagan customs and rites of worship, provided they applied them to other objects; a permission which, though calculated to answer political purposes, was directly contrary to the practice of the apostles, and in its very nature destructive to the progress of true religion.

As for Ethelbert, he was become so zealous a convert, that he bequeathed his own palace to the church, and retired to Reculver, that Augustin might be more at his ease at Canterbury. Notwithstanding all these favours, and the princely magnificence in which he lived, this pious apostle could enjoy no content while the British clergy lived independent of his authority, and unsubjected to the see of Rome.

Independent, therefore, of the desire which Austin had to diffuse the light of the gospel in general, we find he was particularly zealous for his own authority, and extremely solicitous to subject the British Christians, in the remote parts of the island, to his metropolitan jurisdiction, and to the doctrines and discipline of the see of Rome. This is a circumstance the more remarkable, as the British bishops of that age had more enlarged views of things: accordingly they disclaimed all submission to the Roman church, and nobly asserted their independence*.

* Abstract from the Library, p. 129.

This is particularly related by Spelman †, who says, that Austin, by the aid of Ethelbert, King of Kent, called a council of Saxon and British bishops, to meet in the confines of the Mercians, on the borders of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, who met under an oak, in imitation of the pagan Britons, and performed their superstitions, as an imitation, and yet a correction, of their idolatry. He insisted upon their keeping the festival of Easter, and administering the sacraments after the manner of the Roman church, and this with all the haughtiness of a Roman Emperor. The British bishops, and many learned men, differing from the Romish priest, rejected his traditions which he brought from Rome, and detested his pride, renounced his authority, and would not accept of him for their archbishop, as he desired to be, and for the space of an hundred years at least refused to communicate with those that had received these traditions and devices. Then the bishops and churches of Scotland joined with the Britons against those new observances, which the said Augustin brought from Rome. At that time there were near a thousand monks at the monastery at Bangor in Wales, who distinguished themselves for their sobriety, supporting themselves by labour, and spending their leisure hours in prayer and meditation. Over that church at Austin's coming was Dinochus, a learned man, who, when Austin required the British bishops to be subject to his Romish authority, proved, by many arguments, that they did not owe him any such subjection; whereat Augustin, being highly offended, is said to have spoken to the following effect: "That if they would not accept of peace with their brethren, they should receive war from their enemies; and seeing they would not join with him, in preaching the way of life to the Saxons, they should feel the weight of their enemies sword." To which some relate, that he stirred up

• Spelman in conciliis.

Ethelfred King of Northumberland against them, who perfidiously and unmercifully slew many of them, which was soon afterwards recompensed by some British princes; Blederic Duke of Cornwall, Margaduc Duke of South Wales, and Cadwan Duke of North Wales. *

Augustin did not long survive this ineffectual effort, but, before his death, he consecrated his fellow missionaries Melitus and Justus; the first of whom was ordained bishop of London, and the other promoted to the see of Rochester: but after the death of 616 Ethelbert and Sibert, the people apostatised, and expelled these reverend prelates, who fled to France for refuge from Pagan persecution. Ethelbert died A. D. 616, and Austin about the same time, and was buried at Canterbury.

Laurentius, who succeeded to the see of Canterbury, seemed to inherit the pride and bigotry of his predecessor, and still laboured to subject the British church to the tyranny of Rome: but when the son of Ethelbert, and some other Saxon princes, relapsed into idolatry, he began to think of making his retreat; and would certainly have crossed the sea, but, by a ridiculous contrivance to reconvert Eadbald, viz. of pretending an appearance of St. Peter, and of receiving some severe stripes from him, which upon stripping, and shewing the marks to the King, he was so wrought upon, that he returned to the pale of the church, and restored the fugitive prelates. Laurentius soon after died, and was succeeded by Melitus; a prelate of noble extraction, and eminent piety; and his successor was Justus of Rochester, who was empowered by Pope Boniface V. to consecrate bishops †.

* Compare Smollet's History of England, p. 217, with the History of the Church of Great Britain, 4to, p. 13.

† Smollet's History, p. 216.

Library, p. 129.

Notwithstanding the honour of the change in the state of knowledge and religion has been chiefly attributed to Austin and his assistants; yet it was in a great measure owing to others. The West Saxons were converted to christianity by Berinius, who was invested by the Pope with the episcopal dignity for that purpose, independent of Augustin and his coadjutors; and particularly in the kingdom of East Anglia, Northumberland and Mercia. For before this period Paulinus had begun to propagate christianity among the inhabitants of Northumberland, by the assistance of Ethelburga the wife of King Edwin; but the slaughter of that Prince soon overturned all that had been done, and the nation reverted back to idolatry; afterwards when, Oswald, one of his successors, was desirous of converting his subjects, he sent to the Scotch monastery, from whence at length he received Aidan; a person who deserves to be raised from the obscurity of the times, and to be mentioned with singular veneration and esteem, since he was not only learned as any of his contemporaries, but took peculiar care to have schools erected for the education of youth: he likewise earnestly recommended, both to the clergy and laity, a diligent and constant study of the scriptures; being sensible that this was the only way of promoting a genuine and rational knowledge of divine truths, and the consequent practice of religion. Aidan preached the gospel to the Saxons, and by his ministry was the kingdom of Northumberland converted to christianity. Aidan likewise divided his substance among the poor, and went from town to town catechising and instructing the Pagans, or confirming the Christians in their faith *.

The times of the heptarchy furnish us with few such examples, though they abound in the history of many persons, distinguished as warriors, as politicians and

* History of the Church, p. 15.

devotees. The far greater number of Princes were likewise persons of this character; two only or principally deserve to be mentioned; the first is Sigebert King of East Anglia, A.D. 636, who, in consequence of his having been an exile in France, had acquired an understanding and a taste superior to his contemporaries: accordingly, when he was settled on the throne, he did not merely endeavour to convert his subjects to christianity, but instituted seminaries for instruction in the languages and such other literature as was then known: he has sometimes been considered, though without sufficient reason, as the founder of the university of Cambridge. The schools appointed by him were erected in several places, and can by no means be considered as the establishment of an university; and his knowledge was not so enlarged as to preserve him from the superstition and weakness of the times; for, we read, he closed his reign, A. D. 640, by retiring into a monastery. The other Prince of note is Ina, of whom we shall speak by and by.

About this time Suffex and the Isle of Wight were also converted, and Honorius archbishop of Canterbury divided England (so much thereof as was Christian) into parishes; the first Lent began in those parts of England which obeyed the Roman celebration of Easter.

641. Penda Prince of Mercia, having married Alfreda, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumberland, renounced paganism, embraced christianity, and propagated it in his dominions. Indeed Penda his father, that persecutor of piety, was yet alive (and survived two years after) still persisting an heathen till death, but was so far mollified as to permit a toleration of christianity in his subjects*.

Platina tells us †, “there was a famous seminary of learning at Colmkil, from whence sprang many

* History of the Church, p. 17.

† In Bonifacio, 4to.

eminent persons, who not only gave a check to the beginning of antichristian pride at home, and in our neighbouring country, but they sowed the seed of the gospel in other nations; such was that famous Rumold, who was called *Mecklinensis Apostolus*. Gallas converted Helvetia from Paganism, as Pappas witnessed, and built sundry monasteries there. Calumba, a man of excellent learning and piety, lived some time at Bangor, and thence went into Burgundy, where he began a monastery at Luxovien, and taught the monks of his own country especially to live by the work of their own hands, visited Germany, and made many converts there, and Levin also turned many to the faith about Ghent and Esca. Diuma was ordained first bishop of Mercia in the reign of the Christian Penda, where he converted many to the Christian faith, and for his distinguishing gifts the bishopric of Middlesex was committed to him, unto whom succeeded Cella, a Scot. Florentine went to Strasburg, and was the first bishop thereof in 669. About the same time Kellian, the first bishop of Wortsburg, first instructed the people of East France in the Christian faith. Colonat a priest, and Thomas a deacon, followed him in all his travels; Barcard succeeded, to whom King Pippin gave a dukedom."

Pope Agatho very early discovered a zealous regard to promote truth and peace throughout the churches, and accordingly summoned the bishops of Italy to meet at Rome, in order to chuse, together with him, such persons as should be judged the best qualified for probity and learning, to discharge so great a trust.

Pursuant thereunto, Pope Agatho sent John (the archchaunter of St. Peter's in Rome) into England, to compose the difference between Honorius and Wilfrid, the two archbishops, and withal to deliver them the acts of Pope Martin I. and to teach them to sing the liturgy according to the custom of Rome. Be-

nedictus Biscopius, a nobleman of England, went to Rome in the service of the church, and brought many books into the monasteries of Tinmouth and Wirmouth.

Bede, speaking of the custom of those days, says, that at this time they frequented the church with a zealous regard to the public worship; the care of the doctors and priests was to serve God, not the world; to feed souls, not their own bodies: that in those days, wheresoever a clerk or monk did come, he was received as a servant of God; that the people gave good heed unto the words of his exhortation; for masses were not then performed as the common service of the church, nor were the priests prohibited to marry; but Bede, in the subsequent part of his history, complains of the degeneracy of the church, and prevalence of popish doctrines and ceremonies; and more especially of the usurpation, power and influence of the clergy, instances of which are not wanted in the annals of our own and other nations, many of which will occur in the following part of this history.

After this Theodorus (who succeeded *Deus-dedit*) bishop of Canterbury, brought many books thither, erected a well-chosen library, and encouraged his clergy to make use thereof. He rigorously professed conformity to Rome in the observation of Easter, and for that purpose a council was called at Hartford: there Easter was settled according to the Romish rite. In this synod nine other articles were concluded on, as Stapleton hath thus translated them out of Bede.

I. That no bishop should have ought to do in another diocese, but be contented with the charge of the people committed unto him.

II. That no bishop should any-wise trouble such monasteries as were consecrated, and given to God, nor violently take from them any thing that was theirs.

III. That

III. That monks should not go from one monastery to another, unless by the leave of their own abbot ; but should continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion and entrance into religion.

IV. That none of the clergy forsaking his own bishop, should run up and down where he lists ; nor when he came any where, should be received without letters of commendation from his diocesan, &c.

V. That such bishops and clerks as are strangers, be content with such hospitality as is given them ; and that it be lawful for none of them to execute any office of a priest, without the permission of the bishop in whose diocese they are known to be.

VI. It hath seemed good to us all, that a synod and convocation should be assembled once a year, on the first of August, at the place called Cloveshoo.

VII. That no bishop should ambitiously prefer himself above another ; but should all acknowledge the time and order of their consecration.

VIII. That the number of the bishops should be increased, as the Christians became more numerous.

IX. That no man commit adultery, nor fornication ; that no man forsake his own wife, but only for adultery, as the holy gospel teacheth. And if any man put away his wife, being lawfully married unto him, if he will be a right Christian man, let him be joined to no other ; but let him so continue, or else be reconciled again to his own wife.

This synod Stapleton called *the first of the English nation*, that is upon record, whose canons are completely extant.

The other prince that comes under our notice, is INA, King of Wessex, who sustains the character of a lawgiver. He cannot, indeed, be compared with the celebrated legislators of Grecian antiquity : he was not so profound as Lycurgus, nor so wise as

INA, K. of
Wessex, A. D.
688. His cha-
racter.

Solon ; but surely the first Saxon monarch, who composed a body of written laws, is an object worthy our attention. This work he executed by the advice, and with the concurrence of his nobles, bishops, and other eminent persons. Some of his institutes related to the church, and some to the state. They continued in force a considerable time, and at length became the foundation of the code established by Alfred. But excellent as Ina was in several respects, he disgraced himself by an absurd superstition, and introduced into his dominions the tax called Peter's pence, which afterwards extended through all England.

Urged by mistaken notions of religion, he resigned his crown, and took a journey to Rome, in order to confer with Pope Gregory II. He returned to his own country to take leave of his wife Ethelburga, who retired into a monastery at Barking ; then returning to Rome, he assumed the habit of a monk, and died in obscurity and contempt, A. D. 727.

A little before the reign of Ina there flourished in Kent, Theodore, a native of Tarsus, and archbishop of Canterbury. This man was more learned than any of his predecessors, and deserves to be recorded, as taking uncommon pains to promote the cause of literature ; schools were erected by him, in order to teach the languages, geometry, arithmetic, music, and astronomy ; and so successful were these schools, that Bede assures us he knew several persons educated in them, who were able to converse in Greek and Latin as fluently as their native tongue. This was, undoubtedly, a great attainment ; and though the design of Theodore seems principally to have been to carry on his scheme of spreading the customs and discipline of the Roman church ; yet, whatever views his were, it must be owned that the encouragement of knowledge was a noble and generous method of executing his purposes.

Whether

Whether it was owing to the seminaries established by this celebrated prelate, or to what other causes, the imperfection of records will not permit us to determine; but during the latter end of the seventh, and the beginning of the eighth centuries, learning, such as it was, was rather upon the advance in England. There is something in the style and manner of the writers, who lived at that period, which is superior to the authors who preceded or came after them for several ages; and then flourished a set of men, who, all things considered, deserved a large share of reputation. Egbert, archbishop of York, was famous as a great collector of books, a scholar, and a patron of literature. Eddius composed the life of bishop Wilfrid in a better taste of language than had hitherto been customary, Acca produced a number of theological pieces.

But of all the eminent persons that adorned this æra, Bede was the most illustrious; and indeed, notwithstanding the defects of his works, which are chief-

Bede the Venerable, his character.

ly owing to the defects of the times, he was really an extraordinary man. He was the first who wrote a regular ecclesiastical history; and though it is too full of fables and false miracles, it still continues to be valuable. Nor was his knowledge confined to divinity and the annals of the church, but reached to the arts and sciences in general; to grammar, astronomy, chronology, natural philosophy, and ethics. It is true, his treatises on these subjects will be found very imperfect, when compared with the enlightened productions of modern ages; nevertheless, they prove him to have had an uncommon genius and application. He obtained when young the appellation of Venerable, and will always be regarded as a character that is entitled to peculiar honour and esteem.

Bede was the luminary of the north, where he constantly lived; and next to him in reputation was Aldhelm, who was something before him in point of

time, and the chief ornament in the south of England. It is universally agreed he was the first Englishman who composed in Latin; none having heretofore done it, in this island, but such as were either foreigners from the continent, or Irish, or Scots, or Britons: he has likewise himself assured us, that he was the first who introduced poetry among the Saxons, and who wrote upon the measure of verses. He died A. D. 734, aged 72*.

About the year 700, Egfrid expelled Wilfred from his see at York, on account of his factious spirit and dangerous influence with the people; but Wilfred appealing to the Pope, it was decreed in a full synod that he should be restored; but Egfrid set the Pope and his decree at defiance. However such was the zeal of Wilfred, that the merit of converting the South Saxons is ascribed to him, after his expulsion from the see of York; and though he is said to have confirmed his doctrines by miracles, his great success seems to have been owing to the favourable disposition of Adelwalch, who had already embraced the Christian faith, and to the great influence Wilfred acquired among the common people.

The archbishop of Canterbury not only endeavoured to extend his jurisdiction over the British church, but also to reduce the Scottish clergy to the dominion of the Pope. Theodore, a Greek, having been promoted to the see of Canterbury, held a synod at Harford, where, among other particulars in the book of canons, to be diligently observed, he insisted upon their keeping Easter according to the literal direction, on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the first month. This was a stroke aimed at the Britons and Scots, who celebrated that festival by another rule; and two bishops from Icolm-kill had prevailed upon the Northumbrians to adopt their usage in this respect, though they had been converted by Roman

* History of the Church of Great Britain, p. 22.

missionaries. Oswy, King of that country, considering the difference as a subject of great importance, proposed a conference at Whitby in Yorkshire, between Colman, one of the Scottish prelates, supported by several monks of his nation, and Wilfred, who had already brought over the Queen to his opinion. The dispute was of consequence decided in favour of this courtly abbot; while Colman and his party recouped their preferment, and retired to Scotland.

About the year A. D. 709, a synod was held at Alancester, in Worcestershire, to promote the building of Evesham abbey, which was done accordingly; and the same was bountifully endowed by Offa, and other Mercian kings, with large revenues. Not long after another synod was called at London, to introduce into England the practice of image-worship, which as yet was no public practice. Much about the same time it became fashionable for the Kings and Queens of England to turn monks and nuns, and retire into convents; so that in the space of a few years nine distinguished themselves by this monkish practice. From hence we may likewise assert, that the Romish power and superstition gained ground in the English nations. Aldhelm, bishop of Sherborn, wrote a book in favour of the Romish time, and manner of celebrating Easter, which had no small influence on the minds of the people.

The see of Canterbury was at the death of Cuthbert filled with Bridwin, a noble Saxon, of remarkable piety and discretion. But he survived but three years, when Adulph being elected archbishop, received the pall from Pope Paul V. This prelate exerted all his interest and industry to prevent Offa, King of the Mercians, from erecting an archiepiscopal see within his dominions, by which his own metropolitanical power would be dismembered; but Pope Adrian, to whom the dispute was referred, decided in favour of Offa, whom he empowered to erect Litchfield into an archbishopric,

to

to which all the Mercian bishops were declared suffragans,

This was the last blow given to the independency of the British church, for it fixed Offa and his new elected archbishop Adulph, in the interest of Rome, which was so sensible of the great influence it had gained by this compliance with Offa's ambition, that the Pope sent Gregory bishop of Ostia, and Theophilact, another prelate, in quality of legates to England. These came on pretence of reforming the discipline of the English church, and executing the partition of the metropolitical power of Canterbury. A synod was accordingly held in Northumberland, and gave an assent to all the articles which had been already prepared by the legates. These were in effect little more than a confirmation of canons, which had formerly received the sanction of the church, excepting however two new articles, one of which is an admonition to kings to respect the clergy, and the other a caution to the people against choosing illegitimate sovereigns. The decrees of this synod were afterwards confirmed by another, held at Calcluth, which was more frequent and full than the other, and Adulph received the pall from Rome, without Lambert's daring to murmur, for fear of being impeached of treasonable practices.

Offa having exerted himself so much in favour of the church, was considered in other countries as a very religious Prince, and received from Charlemagne the decrees of the second councils of Nice, recommending image-worship, against which the famous Alcuin, who was an Englishman, and a tutor to Charlemagne, had writ with great energy and learning. Indeed his performance had a remarkable effect among the Germans, for by means of it image-worship was solemnly condemned at the council of Frankfort*.

* Smollet, p. 218.

Several synods were successively held at Canterbury, at Cloveshoo, at Calcuith, and another afterwards at Cloveshoo, all relating to matters of a beneficiary nature, and to the prerogative of the Pope or Princes.

In the year of our Lord 747, there was *Decrees of the Synod of Cloveshoo, A. D. 747.* a famous synod held at Cloveshoo, or Clyff, near Rochester in Kent. The matter of the debate related to the government and discipline of the church. This synod was composed of twelve English prelates; Ethelbald likewise King of the Mercians, and the temporal nobility, were present at it, and many of the clergy. The following compendium of the decrees of this synod will afford us an idea of the state of religion at that time.

At the opening of the synod, Pope Zachary's letters were first read in the original by archbishop Cuthbert, and then translated to the audience. In these letters, as *Malmsbury* relates, the Pope admonished the English clergy to reform their lives, and threatened those with excommunication that continued in their irregularities.

This preliminary being over, the bishops proceeded to draw up a body of canons, some of which I shall mention.

1st, It was decreed, that every bishop should be careful to support his character, execute every part of his office, and maintain the canons and constitutions of the church, against all sort of liberty or encroachment. And that those of this order should answer the expectations of their stations, nor engage in secular affairs so far as to be disabled for their functions; but to be remarkably eminent for their probity, self-denial, and learning; that by this means they may be qualified to make an impression upon the people, both by their instructions, and by their practice.

2dly, That the prelates and clergy should be careful to keep a good correspondence with each other, without any flattering applications to any person; considering that they are the servants of the same master, and intrusted with the same commission; and therefore,

fore, though they are divided by distance of place and country, they ought to be united in affection, and pray for each other; that every one may discharge his office with integrity and conscience.

These two canons, but especially the last, seem to be drawn on purpose to guard the liberties of the English church against the pretensions of Rome, and to throw off that precedent of servitude, which *Boniface* had set them in his letter to archbishop *Cuthbert*. It is true, they do not mention the Pope; but by obliging the bishops, to stand up in defence of the antient canons, not to flatter any person upon the score of his ecclesiastical distinction, because the bishops have all of them the honour of the same commission and employment; these general glances, with the grounds, upon which they stand, seem plainly designed to fence against that submission to the papal chair which Boniface recommended.

3dly, That the respective bishops should visit their diocese every year, call the people of all ranks and conditions together, and be particularly careful to preach to those, who lie most out of the way of instruction; and not suffer any unwarrantable and heathenish customs, such as divination, amulets, charms, &c. to continue in the diocese.

The fourth, fifth, and seventh, relate to the regulation of monasteries. The sixth orders the bishops not to ordain any priest, without a previous examination upon the points of learning and morals.

The eighth puts the priests in mind of the advantage of their character, and the business for which they were ordained. That they ought to abstract themselves from the world as much as may be, and spend their time in reading, prayer and exhortation, and other exercises of religion; and, more particularly in the next canon, they are enjoined to preach, baptise, and inspect the manners of the laity in those precincts and divisions assigned them by their respective bishops.

bishops. From hence it appears, that the subdivisions of the dioceses were in some measure formed, and the lines of parishes struck out.

The tenth canon orders the priests to be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine and service of the church; to teach the creed and Lord's prayer in English, and explain the sacraments to the people. This direction is agreeable to Bede's advice to *Egbert* bishop of York; where he tells him, that both the clergy and laity ought to have the creed and Lord's prayer by heart; and that himself had translated them into English for the advantage of the common people, and those that did not understand Latin.

In the eleventh canon, the priests are enjoined to be uniform in the exercise of their function, and to baptise, preach and govern with the same rules and measures.

The twelfth regulates the church-music, provides for the solemnity of the performance, and forbids the clergy to profane the service with the air of the theatre. And in the close of the canon, the priests are enjoined to keep within the bounds of their order, and not to do any thing which belongs to the bishop.

By the thirteenth, the holy days are to be kept every where on the same day, and the time to be governed by the Roman martyrology.

The fourteenth provides for the religious observance of the Sunday or Lord's day, that it ought to be wholly dedicated to God's service; that all secular business and travelling, unless in case of necessity, ought to be forborn; that the people are to be called to church to hear the word of God, and receive the sacraments.

The fifteenth orders the seven canonical hours of prayer should be constantly observed according to custom, and that nothing should be introduced but what
is

is warrantable by the authority of scripture, and agreeable to the practice of the Roman church.

By the sixteenth, the litanies or rogations are enjoined to be kept with great solemnity by the clergy and people; that which is called the great litany, by the Romish church, is ordered to be kept the twenty-fourth day of April.

The other, which stands upon the antient practice of the island, falls three days before our Saviour's ascension; on which divine service is to be performed, and the people to fast till three in the afternoon.

By the seventeenth, the day on which St. Gregory the Great, and Augustin, archbishop of Canterbury, died, are to be made holy-days; and that in singing the litany, the name of Augustine shall be mentioned after St. Gregory.

The eighteenth canon provides for the solemn times of fasting in Ember-weeks: and that the people should have notice given to provide themselves.

The nineteenth and twentieth relate to the government and behaviour of monasteries, with respect to habit, company and employment.

The twenty-first is levelled against drunkenness, luxury, and insobriety of conversation.

The twenty-second, enjoins the religious to live in a constant preparation for the receiving the sacrament of the holy eucharist, or the body and blood of our Saviour, as the canon words express it.

From hence I shall pass to the twenty-fifth, by which the bishops, at their coming from their synod, are obliged to convene the priests and abbots of their dioceses, to publish the canons of the council, and command their observance. And if any disorder proves too strong for the bishop's correction, he is to acquaint the archbishop with it at the meeting of the next synod. But not a word of carrying the complaint farther to Rome.

The

The twenty-sixth states the right use of charity, and provides against wrong views and misapplications in this duty; and here the synod declares, that alms are not given to commute for *penance*, to dispense with the discipline of the church, or procure us a liberty for sinning: that those who think the justice of God can be bribed in this manner, make their charity insignificant, and bring an addition to their guilt: that alms signifies *mercy* both in the name and thing; and that they are no less a charity to the giver than to the receiver. And therefore he that has a true compassion for his own soul, should always give that which is his own, and not circumvent or oppress one neighbour to be charitable to another.

The twenty-seventh dilates upon the usefulness, and directs in the manner and qualifications, of singing psalms. That this part of divine service ought to be performed with due recollection, with pious dispositions and postures of respect; and, after the singing is ended, there are prayers mentioned both for the living and the dead; and those that do not understand Latin, are to pray in the vulgar tongue. The prayer for the dead runs thus: *O Lord, we beseech thee, for thy great mercy, grant that the soul of such a person may be secured in a state of indisturbance and repose; and that he may be admitted, with the rest of thy saints, into the regions of light and happiness.*

This canon, like the last, puts the people in mind not to depend upon the performance of one branch of duty, to the neglect of another. It seems some people began to believe that one good action was a sort of dispensation in other cases; and, which was still more extravagant, they fancied they might perform their duty by proxy, built upon foreign merit, and be good by the virtue of their neighbours. The canon is the larger in exposing the vanity and danger of this reliance, because they had a large instance of such an unreasonable expectation in a layman of condition.

This

This person, it seems, had forfeited the communion of the church, and was put under discipline for some great crime : now he desired the rigour of his penance might be taken off, and that he might be reconciled upon the suggestion following. He acquainted those spiritual directors he belonged to, that he had procured several persons to fast, sing psalms, and distribute charity on his account ; so that if he was to live three hundred years, there was enough done for him by other good people, though he should do little or nothing himself : but the canon declares, with great indignation, against the folly of such a presumption.

The last *canon* enjoins, That Kings and Princes, and the whole body of the commonwealth, shall be publicly prayed for in the church.

The bishops names that sat in this synod were, Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury ; Dunnus, bishop of Rochester, &c. ; and Podda, bishop of Leicester, &c. Linsey, who governed the sees of Winchester, Sherborne, &c. in the kingdom of the West Saxons ; Herdulp, bishop of Dunwich and Helman ; Egwulf, bishop of London ; Milred, of Worcester ; Alwi, of Lindsey ; and Sigga, of Selcey in Suffex : but Egbert, being of the royal family and brother to King Eadbert, was not there.

When the synod broke up, archbishop Cuthbert dispatched his deacon to give Boniface, archbishop of Mentz, an account of what was done, pursuant to the true intent and design thereof by Ethelbald, and those bishops who acceded to its convention, and confirmed the decrees by their subscription *.

About the year 755, Kenulphus, King of the West Saxons, conferred large privileges on the monastery of Abingdon, in Berkshire, A. D. 758, and dead bodies were first admitted to be buried in churches, which by degrees brought in great superstition †.

* Collier's Eccles. History, B. II. 159.

† History of the Church of Great Britain, p. 22. Ibid. 23.

In the year 789, the Danes first invaded England with a considerable army. *The Danish Invasion, A. D. 789.* Lindesfern or holy island was the first that felt the fury of these Pagans, but soon after no place was secure from their cruelty.

ETHELBERT VI. King of the East Saxons, went to marry the daughter of Offa, and Offa perfidiously caused him to be murdered, after which to commute for his sin he gave the tenth part of all he had to the church, and several lands to the see of Hereford, and then he went to Rome, repaired, beautified and richly endowed the English monastery, and there confirmed to Pope Adrian the gift of Peter-pence; then was the corps of St. Alban, in a pompous manner, taken up, enshrined and adored by the spectators. Offa likewise procured the canonization of St. Alban, the absolution of his own sins and many murders, and then returning home founded the monastery of St. Alban, bestowed great riches upon it in lands, exempted it from paying Peter-pence, episcopal jurisdiction, and the like, and died the next year.

EGBERT, *the First King of England*, A. D. 800.

Egbert, King of the West Saxons, in the year 800, having vanquished Mercia, Kent, Essex, and Northumberland, received a general invitation to accept the sovereignty of England, both in church and state; in consequence of which he returned and mounted the throne of Wessex, and began to reign over a people both rich and powerful, in whose affluence and affection he foresaw his own future greatness. He had, in all probability, already planned the union of the heptarchy; but before he would impart the least hint of that design to the other Saxon nations, he resolved to humble the Britons in such a manner that they should be in no condition

to interfere with the execution of his grand project. Mean while, in order to avert the suspicion of the Saxons, he acted as a mediator in all the differences subsisting between the princes of the heptarchy, and in particular effected a reconciliation between Car-dulf King of Northumberland, and Kenulf King of Mercia, who had taken the field against each other, and were on the eve of terminating their quarrel by the sword.

These good offices, employed with such moderation, the prudence he manifested in his own government, and known capacity in the affairs of war and peace, raised his character to such a degree of reputation, that he was considered as the father of the English nation, and chosen chief of the Saxon heptarchy.

Egbert having united the heptarchy, was so engaged by continual wars, that he had very little time to advert to ecclesiastical affairs; and these troubles detached the people so much from the practice and study of religious duties, that the whole nation was overspread with ignorance, and a total relaxation of morals ensued. During this reign, however, Withlaf, the tributary King of Mercia, granted to the abbey of Croyland a famous charter, which was confirmed by the states of the kingdom. Among other privileges and exemptions contained in this charter, it ordained that the monastery of Croyland should be held as a sanctuary, which no officer of justice should presume to violate, on pain of losing his right foot; and that the abbots and monks should be entertained through all parts of Mercia, with all the honours and distinction due to a prince of the blood. This deed was confirmed by Egbert, and seems to have been the only ecclesiastical transaction of his reign: but his successor Ethelwulf, who was entirely governed by the clergy, and left the administration to Swithin, bishop of Winchester, extended his compliance to the church

church farther than it had ever been carried by any of his predecessors, and bestowed upon it the tythes of all England, in an authentic charter, confirmed in a general assembly at Winchester, and signed by the substituted kings of Mercia and East Anglia.

It might naturally be expected, that when the seven kingdoms came under the dominion of one Prince, the state of things would grow better, and knowledge begin to revive in England: but the fact was far otherwise; and if we enquire into the causes of it, several circumstances will be found that contributed to the production of the contrary event; the wars carried on by Egbert against his neighbours gave rise to much confusion and desolation, and when he had reduced the nation under his government, it would be still a considerable time before affairs would be brought into so peaceable and flourishing a condition, as was necessary to the progress of learning. Moreover, the spirit of the age was directly opposite to literary improvement, an universal ignorance prevailed, and there was no thought about the cultivation and improvement of human nature. To this concurred the absurd sentiments that were propagated with regard to religion, and the enormous power and influence of the clergy, which could only be supported by the ignorance and stupidity of the people. Indeed the situation of the whole world, during this period, and for many centuries, afford a strong proof, that where the scriptures are neglected, and rational principles concerning religious matters totally excluded, the other branches of science, and the faculties of the mind in general, will greatly suffer. It may perhaps be supposed that the monasteries had a tendency to preserve and favour literature: but whatever their tendency was, they had in reality rather a contrary effect; they were not examples of piety, or seats of the muses; the persons who resided in them did not fix upon them as retreats to awaken their devotion, and

enlarge their understanding, but as places where they might live exempt from military service, and securely indulge their lust and vices; so that monasteries were little else than the abodes of wickedness. Bede complains of them again and again in his writings, and he has told us they were in so corrupt a state, that such as desired to be sincerely pious were obliged to go abroad for education*.

Bede likewise informs us, that the Christian church at that time was far gone from its original purity; for the monks had introduced several practices into the church, which were not of apostolic institution, making use of every means in their power to inspire people with great reverence for the Pope of Rome, and to an high veneration for monasteries, so that it is surprising how many was erected, and how richly they were endowed even in the infancy of the church.

The reigns of *Ethelbald*, *Ethelbert*, and *Ethelred I.* are very barren of all ecclesiastical matter; except the destruction of monasteries by the Danes, which the historians in those days have described in very pathetic terms; regretting in particular the three famous convents of Croyland, Ely, and Maderhamstede, in which the monks were massacred, and their libraries burned. We have already observed that the cruelty of the Danes was so inveterate against every person appertaining to the culture of the Christian religion, that those few monks who escaped their barbarity, either quitted the kingdom, or had recourse to other employments for a livelihood, when they found themselves deprived of the revenues upon which they formerly subsisted; so that *Alfred* the Great, when he triumphed over those invaders, could find no monks in England, and was obliged to replenish the monasteries he built with ecclesiastics invited from foreign countries. This great prince, who contributed so

* Library, p. 180.

much to the restoration of learning and religion, enacted many ecclesiastical as well as civil institutions. The first part of these is little more than a transcript of the decalogue, omitting the second commandment, because repugnant to image-worship, which had by this time gained footing in England. These are followed by an abridgment of the regulations instituted by *Moses*, as recorded in the book of Exodus; and a recapitulation of the gospel-dispensation; after which we find a short introduction to his code of civil laws, collected from those of *Ina*, *Offa*, and *Estrelbert*, the first of all the Saxon Kings who were converted to christianity.

Another historian gives us much the same account. Introductory to the character of Alfred, he observes, that the grand circumstance which destroyed the very traces of knowledge, and cut it up by the roots, was the invasion of the Danes, which so soon succeeded the abolition of the heptarchy, that there was no time to bring the kingdom into order and discipline. In consequence of the numerous and repeated attacks of that people, who were more barbarous than the Saxons, an almost universal ruin was spread through the island, and the monks were totally dispersed, so that the few among them that had applied themselves to useful learning, were driven away or murdered; the wisdom they possessed, whatever it was, perished with them. Hence, with respect to the history of religion and learning, little can be recorded from the reign of Egbert to the reign of Alfred, who, when he came to the crown, found science in so deplorable a condition, that he has himself assured us that he scarce remembered one man on the south side the Humber who understood his prayers in the English tongue, or could translate a piece of Latin into his native language*.

* Library, p. 180.

ALFRED, A. D. 872.

When the Danes had already subdued Northumberland and East Anglia, and gained footing in the very heart of Wessex, all the churches and monasteries burnt, and the whole country depopulated, Alfred seasonably and successfully assumed the dignity of King, and merited that of father to his people *.

*Alfred's
character.*

Were it not for Alfred the period we are writing of would hardly deserve to be mentioned; but he has thrown a mighty lustre upon it, for in him we meet with abilities and accomplishments that are truly astonishing. If we had materials, it would be very delightful to trace the steps by which such a mind advanced to maturity, to mark the incidents that awakened the vigour of his genius, and rendered him so distinguished and enlightened in a barbarous age, and amidst a scene of general discord. We are informed, that when he was very young, he was twice at Rome, and perhaps a persecuting impression might be made upon him, while in that famous city: for though Rome itself was then in an exceeding low state of science, compared with what it had formerly been; yet it was vastly superior in this respect to the dark and frozen regions of the north. But whatever impressions Alfred might receive at that place, no immediate advancement in knowledge seems to have been the result of them; for we are told his education was so far neglected, that he did not learn to read till he was twelve years of age; but when he had made a beginning, his capacity and assiduity was such, that his progress was equally surprising.

He was undoubtedly in every instance one of the most illustrious characters recorded in history, and deservedly remains to this day the peculiar favourite of the English nation.

* Smollet, p. 249.

With regard to his personal character, we shall find that he was superior to any man of his time; considered as a poet and mathematician, such was his ardent desire for the cultivation of his mind, that he always retained about him the most accomplished scholars he could meet with, with whom he perpetually engaged in literary enquiries and pursuits.

Nor was his wisdom locked up in his own breast, and reserved merely for his private entertainment, but was diffused around him in a plentiful manner. He was extremely solicitous to have his subjects enlightened and improved; and sought out methods that could contribute to so desirable an effect. For which purpose, one of his first steps was to invite from the British monasteries, and from the continent, as many learned men as possible, whom he received and treated with great marks of friendship, and in concurrence with them erected a number of schools for the instruction of his people.

Among the learned strangers who assisted *Alfred* in his great work of restoring the lustre of the church, and reviving the arts and sciences, the principal were, Johannes Scotus Erigena, an Irish Scot, who had studied at Athens and other foreign countries, and made himself master of the Greek and oriental languages; he then repaired thro' Italy to France, where he acquired an eminent degree of favour and familiarity with Charles the Bald; and the fame of his talents extending to England, he was invited hither by *Alfred*, whom he instructed in the liberal arts, and whose friendship he enjoyed, notwithstanding his opposition to the doctrine of transubstantiation, which rendered him obnoxious to the see of Rome. Towards the latter part of his life, he opened a school in the monastery of Malmesbury, where his scholars murdered him with their penknives; though we are ignorant of the occasion. Another foreigner, for whom *Alfred* conceived a very early affection, was one *Grimbald*, who entertained him so hospitably in

his journey to Rome, that he afterwards created him abbot of Winchester. He was a learned divine, well skilled in music, and distinguished himself for his talents in oratory. The first abbot of the new abbey, founded in the isle of Ethelney, was a native of Old Saxony, and almost all the monks, priests, and deacons were foreigners; not but that his own country produced a number of men who distinguished themselves by their piety and erudition, namely, *Affer Menvenis*, a monk of St. David's, so attached to his retirement, that all the caresses and favours of Alfred could not prevail upon him to forsake it entirely, though he consented to live one half-year with the King, who promoted him to the bishopric of Sherburn, and bestowed upon him many other marks of his particular regard. Yet he must not be confounded with his name-sake and uncle, *Afferius*, archbishop of St. David's, who wrote part of Alfred's life. *John*, the monk, belonging to the same monastery, to whose instruction the King owed his knowledge of the Latin tongue. *Werefred*, bishop of Worcester, who had been driven by the Danes into banishment; from whence he was recalled by Alfred, who had employed him to translate Gregory's Dialogues. *Plegmund*, archbishop of Canterbury; and *Dunwulf*, bishop of Winchester, who is said by some authors to have been the very cow-herd whom *Alfred* served in disguise. That prince it seems discovered in him a genius far above his station in life, which he exalted in proportion to his merit.

But of all the ecclesiastics who dignified the court of *Alfred*, *Neotus*, or St. *Neot*, was the most remarkable for his learning, piety, and example: in being descended from the blood royal of the East-Angles, he was respected as a prince as well as a prelate; and is said, by his personal authority and admonitions, to have restricted the follies of Alfred's youth. He was buried at St. Guerer's church, at Gainsbury, in Cornwall;

Cornwall; and such at that time was the general opinion of his sanctity, that he supplanted the Cornish saint, and gave his own name to the church, which was thenceforward called *Neotstow*. The palace of Earl Alric, in Huntingdonshire, was afterwards converted into a monastery, and dedicated to this saint, whose body was translated thither; though not suffered to remain in this place neither, for, in the reign of King John, his bones were removed from this St. Neot to the abbey of Croyland. This ecclesiastic, and the greatest part of those above-mentioned, taught together in the university of Oxford, which was regulated and endowed by Alfred, who frequently assisted in person at their exercises, until some disputes arose between the native and foreign professors, and then Grimbold retired to the monastery at Winchester, which the King had lately founded*.

Moreover, that the path of knowledge might be rendered still easier to the English nation, Alfred employed the ablest persons who were about him, in writing such books as were calculated for the instruction of the multitude; a most judicious and useful scheme! and as there were but very few who were capable of putting it into execution, he commenced author himself, and composed a variety of pieces; so great a variety, that we are astonished at his finding leisure to produce them in the midst of the dangerous wars, and important public concerns, in which he was continually engaged.

The motive from which his literary performances took their rise, does him honour: he did not write from a principle of vanity, but from a laudable view for the improvement and happiness of mankind; and accordingly we find the matter of them were worthy of his character, as the prince and father of his country. Many of his compositions relate to the principles of government and laws; and others of them were calcu-

* Smollet.

lated for the instruction of his people in general, adapted to inspire them with devotion, to excite their attention to the moral virtues, and to provide for them innocent and instructive entertainment. Nor should his method of doing it pass unnoticed, as he employed the learned about him to give the general sense of an author, and then gave it a dress best adapted to the taste and to the apprehensions of the public.

Nor did he confine his subjects to his own times, but in most of his undertakings extended his views to the welfare of posterity: besides the schools erected by him in different places, he prohibited any one from assuming the trust and dignity of a magistrate who was not versed in learning; and, that there might not be wanting a supply of men qualified to discharge the several offices of government, he compelled, by law, those who had competent fortunes to give their children a proper education.

University of Oxford founded by King Alfred. One principal object which shewed his regard to learning, and has rendered his name peculiarly illustrious, was his being the FOUNDER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. We say the founder, though we are not insensible that some writers have contended for a higher antiquity, but, we think, not supported by sufficient authority.

Alfred erected three halls, in each of which twenty-six scholars were educated. The sciences taught were divinity, logic, music, geometry, astronomy, grammar, and rhetoric; and the ablest men of the age were appointed the teachers. Such was the beginning of Oxford as a seat of letters, and the residence of the muses; and since that time it hath risen to its utmost degree of splendor, and has become the largest university in the world: it has no equal for the number and magnificence of its colleges and public buildings, the size and value of its libraries, the multitude of its professors and pupils, and the variety of its endowments. It hath produced persons eminent in all branches of literature;

terature; classical and polite learning have appeared in it with peculiar lustre; and it continues the habitation of substantial knowledge, true taste, and national instruction.

Alfred shines with equal, perhaps with greater glory as a legislator, than he doth as the friend and patron of letters in general; and not one of our English princes deserve to be named with him in this respect: for, in order to provide for his subjects a full body of laws, he searched into the institutions of foreign nations, collected the regulations of the British Kings, and of his Saxon ancestors, and drew from them what was most valuable and useful. It is much to be lamented that the code established by him has not been transmitted to us entire; but enough of it remains to fill us with the warmest veneration for his memory, and to convince us that he had the noblest views for the happiness of posterity, as well as of his own times; and the natives of this island must owe him peculiar esteem, since to him we are indebted for many of the most important privileges which, at the present day, constitutes the dignity and felicity of our political constitution*.

Moreover, with relation to his skill in the arts, and his attention to commerce, he was superior to any monarch of the age: he erected cities, repaired palaces, and applied himself diligently to the study of ship-building, so as to reduce it to a science, and invented vessels of such a construction as enabled him to obtain the victory in several engagements with the Danes. From a motive of piety, and to relieve the Christians of Malabar, he sent persons to the East-Indies, and his ships returned home with precious stones, perfumes, and other valuable commodities. It is likewise a certain fact, that he attempted the discovery of a north-east passage, and employed *Othbar*, a Dane, and *Wolstan*, an Englishman, for that purpose.

* Library, p. 183. Rapin's Hist. vol. I. p. 14.

If we consider the religion of Alfred, though no doubt it partook of the temper of the times, yet we have no reason to believe that it was remarkably superstitious: there is nothing recorded of him which favours of the mean and monkish spirit observable in many preceding and succeeding princes; his piety was ever sincere and fervent, and as rational as the period in which he lived would admit.

In *Alfred* we may behold what amazing effects may be produced by the genius and abilities of one man. Such was the influence he had upon the nation, that, in a few years, it was transformed into quite another people: the English, from being cowardly, poor, despicable, and ignorant, became brave, rich, respectable, and, comparatively speaking, knowing and polite; but they were governed by a prince who was almost a prodigy in every respect, and we must travel through several centuries before we shall find a character on which we can expatiate with equal pleasure, and which does so much honour to human nature.

Though Alfred was a prodigy, yet his own improvements were much limited by the ignorance of the age; and he must necessarily be unacquainted with a thousand things that are at present known by persons of very moderate capacities. This too was the case with regard to the professors and tutors appointed by him at Oxford and other places; they had not accurate and extensive views of any science, and therefore could not communicate such views to their disciples. Indeed it was not possible, in so dark a period, to make a large progress in philosophy and sound learning; the state of religion, the prevailing manners of the world, the want of good examples, all stood in opposition to the advancement of real wisdom: add to this, that the repeated invasions of the Danes put a stop to the cultivation of knowledge, and at length brought back an universal barbarism. This great prince died in the fifty-second year of his age, October 26, A. D. 900.

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As it would exceed the limits of this work to give a detail of the civil and ecclesiastical laws of this prince, the curious reader may refer to Collier's Eccles. Hist. Vol. I. book. iii. p. 163 to 169.

EDWARD, A. D. 900.

Edward, Alfred's successor, imitated the virtues of his father in a number of benefactions to the church; yet his reign is remarkable for a very particular exertion of the authority of the Roman see. Pope Formosus being informed that the bishopric of Wessex had been many years vacant, sent over a bull, excommunicating the King, and all his subjects; which being publicly read at a general assembly of the states, by Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury, the vacant sees were immediately filled, and three new bishoprics erected in Wessex: then Plegmund set out for Rome, where the sentence was revoked, and, at his return to England, he consecrated seven prelates in one day.

But notwithstanding this instance of weakness, all historians agree in bestowing high encomiums upon EDWARD, and in representing him as not much inferior to his father. It is, however, but little which is said of his literary character; though enough to convince us that he was a man of abilities and understanding. Perhaps we may consider as some proof of it, an useful and remarkable regulation he made, that if a servant was guilty of theft, the person who recommended him should be answerable for his crime, and responsible for his right behaviour. We read also, that Edward was particularly careful in the education of his children: that, in consequence of his attention in this respect, they were distinguished by their improvements; and that his daughters were so celebrated for their accomplishments, as to be sought after, and obtained in marriage, by the greatest foreign princes, kings, and emperors.

But

But the grand point which intitles him to a place in the history of letters, is his being generally looked upon as the founder of the university of Cambridge. The fact, however, like other ancient facts, is not so clear as to be wholly free from dispute ; while some go back to the fabulous ages, for the original of this famous seminary ; and some contend that it had no existence as a school of learning, till the year 1110, in the reign of Henry I. But, without entering into these controversies, we shall only embrace the present opportunity of observing, that, from small beginnings, Cambridge is become, in a course of time, exceedingly illustrious, and, in rank, the second university in the world. Inferior to Oxford in magnitude, beauty, the number of colleges, buildings, professors, and students, it is, notwithstanding, capable of boasting many noble edifices and foundations. But though Cambridge must yield the palm, in these respects, to her sister, we suppose she will be unwilling to do it in the valuable attainments of science and literature. She, as well as Oxford, hath produced a number of eminent men, several of whom we shall have occasion to mention in the course of our work ; not, indeed, as members of a single seminary, but as the ornaments of their country, and the glory of human nature. It has often been said, that Oxford has excelled in the knowledge of the classics, belles lettres, and the languages ; while Cambridge hath made a superior progress in philosophy, mathematics, and the severer studies. Nevertheless, it must be granted, that she has always educated many persons who have been celebrated for their taste in polite learning ; and can, at this day, triumph in her Hurds, her Masons, and her Greys. For our part, we sincerely wish prosperity to both, and heartily pray there may never be any other contention between them, than who shall form the greatest number of characters that will be an honour to religion, to letters, and to the public.

ATHELSTAN, A. D. 925.

After the death of King Edward, his eldest son **ATHELSTAN** was crowned at Kingston upon Thames, by Athelm, archbishop of Canterbury. This ceremony of crowning and anointing the English Kings by some prelate was, according to Malmesbury, first used in the reign of King Alfred. Athelstan soon after his coronation began to enter upon action, and shewed himself such an enterprising and successful prince, as gave great terror to many of his enemies, and to be esteemed and caressed by foreigners, acquired some very advantageous alliances, procured honourable matches for his sisters; nay exceeded the bounds of the English limits, for he obliged the Kings of Scotland and Wales to resign their crowns to him; which he soon after, as a prince of generosity, restored to them, upon doing him homage. Thus in civil affairs he gained applause; but all the glory of his achievements was eclipsed by one act of inhumanity towards his brother Edwin; who being accused of disaffection to his Majesty, he too easily gave credit to it, banished his brother, with circumstances of cruelty highly aggravating, by putting him into a ship with only one servant, without rigging or crew to sail the vessel; and was driven by a storm, which soon after beset him, to such great distress, that he threw himself into the sea. This precipitate act of Athelstan soon after stung him with great remorse, so that to silence the accusations of his conscience, he executed the person who informed him against his brother, and submitted himself to seven years penance.

But nevertheless Athelstan is confessed to have been a very illustrious and accomplished prince, and is justly ranked among the lawgivers of England. His eloquence is, likewise, highly extolled by historians, who have been pleased to assert that he was equal, in this respect, to the Roman orators. There
was

was a regulation made during this reign, that shews an enlargement of mind much above the times, and which even more civilized ages have not been able to reach: it was, that a merchant who had effected three voyages to the Streights, on his own account, should be put on a footing with a gentleman. There is one fact related concerning Athelstan, which, if sufficiently authentical, would appear of peculiar importance in a survey of literature. We are confidently told by several modern writers, that he ordered the Bible to be translated out of the Hebrew into the Saxon language, for the benefit of his subjects. If this be true, it was a work of the utmost usefulness and value, and shews the institutions of Alfred to have produced very happy effects. But, notwithstanding the improvements introduced by that prince, it is much to be questioned whether there were any persons in the kingdom capable of executing so grand a design; for, in the period we are speaking of, the best scholars Europe afforded seem to have been totally unacquainted with the oriental tongues.

There were several synods, or rather mixed conventions of church and state held in this prince's reign. Sir Henry Spelman mentions four, but the most considerable was the synod at Graetly, A. D. 928. The principal constitutions of which were,

First, To enjoin the payment of tythes, both personal and prædial; and requiring the bishops and others of the clergy to set a good example. The second, for prescribing acts of charity. The third, regulates some proceedings in law, against sacrilege, idolatrous sacrifices, witchcraft, robberies, &c. The fourth and fifth, for ascertaining the value of coins, and preserving one fixed standard. The sixth, prohibits buying and selling on Sundays. The seventh, prescribes sundry penalties against perjury, as that the perjured person should never more give evidence, nor be buried in consecrated ground, unless severe penance be per-

performed. By the seventh, the standard of weights and measures were to be regulated by the bishops standard; magistrates are enjoined to preserve peace, and to exercise lenity and forbearance towards servants.

By the preamble of these constitutions it appears that the legislature in civil matters lay wholly on the King, and that the bishops and other great men were convened for their advice, and not to give any force or authority to the laws. But it is a sad instance of the deficiency in their laws, and of the weakness of the legislature, that the fine for killing men was according to their rank; thus that of a duke was valued at 3000 thrimfa's *, a bishop or earl 8000, a priest 2000, and of a peasant 30 thrimfa's, or at most but 100 shillings. Athelstan, however, made some very good laws, for the encouragement of a foreign trade, and died at Gloucester, A. D. 940.

From the days of Athelstan, down to the conquest, the state of knowledge evidently went backward, and the nation sunk into the depth of ignorance and superstition. Europe in general, during the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, was over-run with ignorance and barbarity; and England, if possible, was still in a worse condition. It is really painful to reflect, that, in the course of several hundred years, we meet with little worthy to be recorded. Like travellers in the deserts of Arabia, we often see nothing for a long time together, but barren sands; and if now and then we come to a verdant spot, though that spot is extremely beautiful, compared with the dreary prospect around it, yet it partakes of the sterility of the soil by which it is encompassed.

The disputes that agitated the world were of too low and trifling a nature to merit a place in our work. The insolent and fiery Dunstan occasioned much bustle about the celibacy of the clergy; and how little they were engaged in literary pursuits, appears from a

* Thrimfa, a piece of the value of three shillings.

canon, enjoining every priest to learn some occupation as a handicraftsman; a regulation which, as circumstances stood, might be exceedingly proper and reasonable. Another decree prescribes, that they shall be capable of repeating the Creed and the *Pater noster*. In the reign, however, of Ethelred II. it is said, a mission was sent to Norway, at the request of the King of that country, to convert the Norwegians and the Swedes to the Christian religion. The archbishop of York and other divines went over upon this occasion, and had great success, though some of them afterwards received the crown of martyrdom. What their real qualifications were, and what influence they had, we are not able to say; but may be well assured their instructions were tinged with the defects of the times.

While so much darkness prevailed in the kingdom, and every thing was gradually giving way to the pretensions of the Roman see, it ought not to be omitted, that the church of England had not as yet embraced the absurd and monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. This is evident from several testimonies; and particularly from the writings of Alfric, who is the sole person that deserves to be mentioned for more than a century; and who is also remarkable for having drawn up a set of homilies for the use of the clergy, now so generally and totally ignorant, as to be utterly incapable of composing discourses for the benefit of their people. With respect, likewise, to the princes who succeeded Athelstan, we meet with nothing but the reduction of the several Saxon statutes and customs into one body, by Edward the Confessor; and an institution of the same monarch, that studious men should be secure in their estates and properties: an institution which contributed very little to the advancement of literature.

EDMUND, A. D. 941.

Edmund succeeded Athelstan, when he was but eighteen years of age. The Northumbrians, perhaps despising this prince's youth, broke their articles made with Athelstan, and notwithstanding the mediation made use of to reconcile the difference, Edmund was obliged to vindicate his right by the sword, and in the year 944 obtained a compleat victory over the Northumbrians, and so far conquered the country as to annex it to his crown; the next year he gave Cumberland to Malcolm King of the Scots upon the terms of homage, and that he should assist him in the field, when occasion required.

The same year Dunstan, who was preferred to the abbey of Glastonbury, published his book of Constitutions, divided into ten chapters, relating to the government and discipline of the church, as well clergy as laity *, which for the most part are an illustration of those compiled and published by Athelstan, and some former princes, with some additional injunctions about fasting and giving of alms, the due observation of Lent, paying of tithes, &c.

In the reign of Edmund a great synod was convoked at London, in which the bishops were enjoined to repair their churches, and the King required to establish funds for their support. In the course of the following year, another assembly enacted constitutions for the advancement of the Christian religion, and the maintainance of concord among the people. Here also churches and royal palaces were made places of sanctuary; and it was ordained, that no mulct for breaking the peace, or satisfaction for murder, should be accepted. About this period the famous Dunstan began to signalize himself in the church and state. He

*Synod at
London, A.D.
944.*

* See Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. book iii. p. 179.

was by birth a West-Saxon, descended of a noble family, and educated at Glastonbury, under a learned Irish monk, who instructed youth in that monastery. Having made extraordinary progress in his studies, he was recommended by Adhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to King Athelstan, who took him under his protection; but no sooner perceiving his ambitious views, and meddling disposition, than he discarded him from his court. It was then that Dunstan retired in disgust from the world, and conceived that affection for the monks which he so cordially expressed in the whole course of his future greatness. Edmund, at his accession to the throne, invited him from his retreat, and made him his confessor; but he was for some misdemeanor dismissed from this office, which, however, he regained by dint of interest, and acquired amazing influence under this monarch and his brother Edred. This monastic life was at the same time dignified by an illustrious member in the person of Turketyl, who was an excellent soldier and sound politician, and quitted the office of chancellor to embrace the life of a recluse, at Croyland, of which he was made abbot, after having received the habit, together with the episcopal benediction and pastoral staff. He was no sooner established in the ecclesiastical office, than he resigned the monastery, with all its deeds, to Edred, who afterwards restored them to Turketyl and his monks, in a full assembly of the states at London, whom he exempted from all service and incumbrances, and confirmed all the former privileges of the monastery, except that of its being a sanctuary, which the abbot wisely refused.

EDRED, A. D. 948.

Edred, brother to Edmund, and third son to Edward the Elder, succeeded to the crown. This was an interruption to the right line, for the late King left two sons, Edwy and Edgar; but being both very young,

young, they were set aside, and Edred being likewise a good benefactor to the monks, the crown was given to him without much opposition, and he was crowned by Odo, archbishop of Canterbury. Edred is described as a prince of great courage and enterprize: in the first year of his reign he reduced the Northumbrians, who had revolted; his next expedition was against the Scots, whom he brought to terms merely by the terror of his arms.

With regard to religion, Edred's conscience was in a manner governed by Dunstan, insomuch that he submitted to great austerities at his direction, and was sent for as his confessor, in his last illness, to give him absolution. He died A. D. 955.

He is said to be the first of all the Saxon monarchs who assumed the title of King of Great Britain, a circumstance that favours the opinion of those who affirm that the King of Scotland held his crown as a fief depending upon England. Though Edred had two sons, Edwy, son of Edmund, succeeded to the crown; the elective power was, in all probability, a privilege which they retained when they first submitted to monarchical government, and a wise precaution to prevent the mischiefs that attend the administration of an infant King*.

EDWY, A. D. 955.

Edwy was elected King by the suffrages of the clergy and nobility. This young monarch was so remarkably handsome, that he acquired the surname of *Pancalus*, or, the Fair, and at his accession was so much in favour with Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, that he crowned him with his own hands at Kingston. The King had married a very beautiful lady, named Ælgivia; but the match was so contrary to the opinion of the bishops and nobles, as gave rise to a series of troubles, and his fondness for her

* Smollet, vol. E. p. 289.

greatly weakened the authority of the bishops over him; for after dinner, on the day of his coronation, Edwy withdrew to an apartment where his wife was, which gave great offence to the bishops and the nobility, and the archbishop commanded him to be fetched back again, and, though every body else refused, Dunstan was ready enough to obey Odo's order, who, reproaching him for his fondness, dragged him to his company. Such an outrage could not fail to excite the resentment of the young monarch and the King's friends, who were offended at the overbearing pride of the abbot; and soon after Edwy demanded a restitution of the sums which Edred had committed to his charge, and strongly insinuated that he had embezzled the public money. Dunstan haughtily answered, that the money had been applied to pious uses by the late King's express orders; which tho', by his artful answer, for the present stopt any further proceedings, Dunstan was soon after banished the kingdom, and returned to Flanders.

Odo, the archbishop, thinking the dignity of the priesthood degraded by the exile of Dunstan, fomented a disaffection: the Mercians and Northumbrians entered into measures with the archbishop; they rebelled, set up Edwy's younger brother Edgar, a boy of thirteen years of age, for their King, who recalled Dunstan, and immediately ordained him a bishop, to give him a seat in that assembly, who made it their business to gloss over this opposition, or rebellion, with the name of religion, for which many pretended miracles were attested to support their unwarrantable proceedings. I mention these instances, though a digression, to shew what exorbitant power and influence the bishops had acquired at that time; so that some historians speak of him as having, by his imprudent measures, forfeited his crown and his happiness; and that if he had been less resolute, he might have soothed his enemies. If he had been more resolute,

lute, he might have put it out of their power to hurt him. Edwy dying, though not without suspicion of being murdered, Edgar succeeded to the crown.

EDGAR, A. D. 959.

Edwy dying without issue, the whole kingdom was reunited under Edgar, who, though in the prime of his youth, had already given undeniable proofs of a shining genius, and the most solid understanding. He had manifested his ability in making himself master of a part of his brother's dominions; and he afterwards demonstrated the extensiveness of his capacity, by keeping his subjects in submission, and his enemies in fear, without straining the regal authority, or engaging in any martial enterprize: but he awed his neighbours by taking such measures, for the defence of his kingdom, as disabled them from invading it with any prospect of success. He divided Northumberland into two governments, and constantly maintained a strong body of forces in the northern provinces, that they might be at hand to quell any insurrection that should happen among the turbulent people; and in order to secure his dominions from the discontents of foreign Danes, he equipped a very strong fleet, amounting to two thousand five hundred vessels, divided into different squadrons, and stationed in such a manner that they were continually cruising round the island, which was thus effectually covered from insult. Such wise precautions could not fail to establish peace and tranquillity among his people, which, in order to fix beyond any probability of interruption, he engaged Kenneth, King of Scotland, in his interest, by ceding to him the whole county of Lothian, extending from the Tweed to the Forth, for which, and the northern counties already bestowed upon Malcolm, that prince certainly did homage. It was, in all probability, owing to this cession and treaty, which secured the Scottish King as an ally, that Maccuse, King of Man and

the isles, some monarchs of Galloway, and the Prince of Wales, submitted so peaceably to the government of Edgar.

The next year Edgar, being at Chester, summoned all the tributary knights to attend him at that place, who rowed his barge down the river Dee, in his way to the monastery of St. John the Baptist, while he himself sat at the helm. Smollet considers this circumstance as no more than a compliment, or frolic, acted in an excursion of pleasure; when it is evident, from the King's behaviour, that it was a real act of homage: nor can his remark, that his successors might justly boast of themselves to be Kings of England, when attended in that manner, be understood in any other light.

Edgar did not think it sufficient to protect England from the insults of foreigners, but he turned his thoughts to some regulations that were necessary in the state, and then in the church. The first was in respect to the magistrates, of whom there was a general complaint; and that he might the better effect his purpose, he every year made a visit to some part of his kingdom, to have the best accounts he could obtain of the conduct of his judges, &c.; and to remove the abuses complained of, he enacted, that every magistrate, convicted of giving a sentence contrary to law, if through ignorance, should be fined one hundred and twenty shillings; but if knowingly, should be turned out, and rendered incapable of acting for the future. We must acknowledge this care worthy of a prince, as it was a proper expedient for restoring such a regard to justice as is the security of the rights of subjects, and the authority of government*.

Another wise regulation was, the reducing all weights and measures to one standard: this he found necessary to support the credit of the kingdom in foreign markets, in which respect he acquired the praises

* Rapin, vol. I. p. 127.

bestowed on him by ancient historians : nay, we may go further ; we may boldly say, that he surpassed them, inasmuch as they obtained their fame by acts of rapine, and the destruction of their species ; whereas Edgar's fame was built upon a noble foundation, that of justice and benevolence †.

But, besides every instance of his great wisdom in regard to civil affairs, he appears to be piously disposed : it is said he founded forty monasteries ; that he repaired and embellished a great number, among others that of Glaston, founded by Edred his uncle. Ingulphus, in his history of Croyland, says the treasure of that monastery, in the reign of Edgar, amounted to no less than ten thousand pounds, besides the vessels, shrines, and other things. Edgar not only enriched the monasteries, but undertook to establish the monks a second time in the possession of ecclesiastical benefices, which he performed with a high hand. This was said to be effected principally at the persuasion of Dunstan, whom Edgar had made archbishop of Canterbury ; and it is highly probable that Edgar himself thought he did a signal service to the church by putting it under the direction of monks. Dunstan, in conjunction with him, professed to bring about a reformation in the inferior clergy ; for this purpose a council was convened, and Edgar himself was present. At this council, the speech he made plainly shews how much he was biased in favour of the monks, and discovered his great dislike of the secular clergy, on account of their immoralities. However, as it appears to flow from sentiments of piety, and is one of the most remarkable transactions of his reign, though it cannot find place in this history, we refer the reader to Rapin's history *.

We cannot wholly omit some of the principal canons of that convention. They confirm the civil privileges and immunities of the church ; prescribe the religious

† Rider, vol. I. p. 22.

* Vol. I. b. iv, p. 129.

observation

observation of the Lord's day; enjoin the clergy to attend constantly at their devotion; forbid the priests changing their cures. It enjoins every priest to learn some employment, to prevent indigence in case of misfortune; it strictly requires parents to instruct their children in the Christian faith; orders that no persons be buried in a church, excepting persons of known probity; forbids the eating of blood: lastly, the priest is to press the people, under his cure, to confession, penance, and satisfaction; lastly, to the use of oil in baptism, and for the anointing of the sick *.

After these canons there follows a form of confession, wherein are directions for the confessarians; and here the priests are obliged to a thorough examination of the penitent, and the penance to be proportioned to the nature and degree of the crime, and the condition, temper, age, and capacity of the person. And in case of infirmity, or weakness of constitution, the rigour of fasting was to be dispensed with. And it is somewhat remarkable, that where the *Pater noster* is enjoined to be said threescore times a day, there is not the least mention of one *Ave Maria*, which is an argument that the modern applications to the Blessed Virgin were unpractised by the church.

A controversy arose, between the monks and the secular clergy, about the lawfulness of priests marrying, in which both parties appeared in earnest, and produced perhaps the best arguments on each side, but conclusive in the affirmative; which we may see, with a variety of testimonies, in Collier's history before cited.

EDWARD *the* Martyr, A. D. 975.

Immediately after the decease of Edgar, Elfser, Duke of Mercia, sworn enemy to the monks, expelled them from all the benefices in his country, which he filled again with secular priests. Some other noblemen followed his example in different parts of the

* Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. b. xi. p. 187.

kingdom;

kingdom ; but the Duke of East-Anglia, and many other persons of the first rank, adhered to Dunstan and his party, which was likewise espoused by almost the whole body of the commons, who looked upon that prelate as a saint and an apostle. This diversity of sentiments produced a contest concerning the succession. Elfrida, their queen-dowager, a woman of an ambitious spirit, had, by her emissaries, circulated some doubts about the validity of Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward, in hopes of raising her own son, Ethelred, to the throne ; and as the other was supported by Dunstan, all that prelate's enemies declared for the son of Elfrida. Though by these means there was a very powerful faction formed in his favour, the archbishop, confiding in his great popularity, arose from the assembly of the states, while they were deliberating upon the choice of a successor to Edgar, and taking prince Edward by the hand, conducted him to the church, where he was anointed and consecrated, in the twelfth year of his age, amidst a vast concourse of people, who testified their joy in loud acclamations.

Whatever inclinations the opposite party felt to controvert this irregular way of proceeding, they would not run the risk of disobliging the multitude, but left Edward in quiet possession of the throne ; while his stepmother, Elfrida, retired to Corf-Castle, in Dorsetshire, which was assigned her dowry, and there in secret hatched schemes for his destruction.

Dunstan having thus secured the continuance of his own power, exerted all his endeavours to maintain the monks in the benefices they had acquired in the preceding reign, which he endeavoured to support by pretended miracles.

Edward however called a synod at Amesbury, in Wiltshire, in which several canons were made with a design to bring the province to a nearer conformity with the Roman church. Besides these ecclesiastical
affairs,

affairs, no transaction of consequence distinguished the reign of Edward, which lasted but four years, and was concluded in a very tragical manner. The King returning one day from the chace in Dorsetshire; rode up to the gate of Corf-Castle, to pay a compliment to his step-mother Elfrida, who invited him to alight; but being in a hurry to be gone, she prevailed with him to drink a glass of wine on horseback, and while he was swallowing the liquor was stabbed in the back by one of her domestics.

ETHELRED II. A. D. 978:

Such was the disposition and inexperience of this prince, that we find the reins of government were greatly relaxed, and all the necessary precautions for the security of the kingdom entirely neglected: the principal nobility who had been entrusted with the government of different counties, perpetuated the administration in their families, assumed the name of dukes, exercised an independent authority in their own districts, and disregarded that union, upon which alone the safety and welfare of the nation could depend. The Danes took advantage of it to renew their depredations on the kingdom, and Ethelred seeing his realm reduced to a miserable situation, obeyed the dictates of his fears and despondence, and submitted to pay thirty thousand pounds to those invaders; upon which many of the Danes retired to their own country. But a good number of them chose to fix their habitation in England; where being supported by the natives of the same race, they became extremely insolent and oppressive. In short, we find nothing interesting in the reign of this prince of a civil or religious nature; for at the beginning of it he found a rich and flourishing kingdom, which he left in extreme poverty. He died after a short illness, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign, A. D. 1016.

EDMUND,

EDMUND II. *surnamed* Ironside, A. D. 1016.

On the death of Ethelred; the citizens of London immediately proclaimed Edmund, his eldest son, by Ethelgiva, his first wife. This young prince was of a constitution so remarkably strong, that he acquired the surname of Ironside: The many signal proofs of his courage and conduct contributed to his election at this juncture. And Livignus, archbishop of Canterbury, crowned him soon after. But the rest of the bishops and nobility being summoned by Canute to Southampton, declared for him, and solemnly renounced the race of Ethelred. After the Dane had taken an oath, that he would govern them faithfully in matters, both secular and religious, after many contests and struggles for the crown, Edmund was induced to open a conference on the subject of peace, in order to prevent any farther effusion of blood. This proposal being eagerly embraced by both parties, a treaty was concluded, in which this kingdom was divided between the two competitors; all the country to the south of the Thames and part of Wessex was assigned to Edmund, and all the rest of the island ceded to Canute. After the ratification of the treaty, by the perfidy of Edric, or some other person, in which historians are not agreed, Edmund was assassinated before he had opportunity to display his virtues. However, he appears to have been a person of strict justice, great benevolence, sublime generosity, intrepid courage, and invincible patience; though these virtues were obscured by the weakness he shewed in admitting Edric into favour, notwithstanding he had been the ruin of his father by his treachery.

CANUTE the GREAT, A. D. 1017.

As soon as Canute heard of the murder of Edmund, he convened a general council of all the nobility and clergy at London, in order to secure the succession of the whole kingdom. When the assembly was met, he artfully availed himself of the last treaty he had made with the late King, and it was not without much difficulty he preserved his kingly authority. We shall not enter upon the civil part of his history and character; it is acknowledged by some historians, that no King ever deserved a more contradictory character, nor that any administration produced a greater variety of conduct: he discovered an ambition that regarded nothing but the accomplishments of his wishes: even the acts of superstition, which he performed to atone for his former cruelties, may be suspected to be incited by policy, and tinged with ambition. The grandeur of his expedition to Rome, and the large sums he expended there; may be charged with ostentation, if not with profusion. Yet, with all his faults, it must be confessed he was possessed of great virtues, and was certainly a person of great abilities. He seemed to have been well acquainted with mankind, and able to turn the various dispositions of his subjects to his advantage. Scarce any monarch ever raised popular odium so high, or allayed it so effectually as Canute; but in the latter part of his reign he paid a much greater regard to the interest and to the esteem of his subjects. The variety of his victories did not so entitle him to the epithet of Great, as the virtues which he practised during the peaceable interval of his administration. It was in that period that he manifested his piety, his charity, and his equity: his continence was great, his address engaging, his affability remarkable, his mercy extensive: his love of peace manifested itself in his encouragement of those who were

were of a pacific disposition, and his strict regard to justice in his severity to those who were guilty of any acts of robbery or violence. The tender concern he had for the welfare and prosperity of the meanest of his subjects, is evident from many of his letters to his officers; and, during the calm of peace, he applied his thoughts to the sublime study of legislation, and, by the number of his laws, seemed to have made it his study to leave no grievance without redress. For the impartial administration of justice, he ordered that no distinction should be made between rich and poor, and recommends mercy in all decisions; that no person should be put to death for a small offence; and in case any judge perverted judgment out of prejudice, or for the sake of lucre, he was to be fined the value of his head*, and removed from his place. Persons guilty of conspiracy against the King were punished with loss of life; and the demolishing or burning houses, theft, and murder, were declared to be such offences for which no satisfaction could be made by way of mulct and compensation. The regulations he prescribed with respect to married persons, were highly conducive to make that state respectable, and to prevent incontinence.

The ecclesiastical laws, enacted by this monarch, are not less curious than the civil, and shew that he extended his concern, not only to the secular, but likewise to the spiritual welfare of his kingdom; and with this view he enacted, that no fairs, markets, or other secular affairs, should be practised on the Lord's day. All Christians were obliged to receive the eucharist, or the sacrament of the Lord's supper, three times a year. And in order to oblige his clergy to live suitably to their character, and to shew they were not exempted by their order from the civil jurisdiction, he enacted, that if a priest was guilty of murder, or

* This must relate to the different value set upon noblemen, priests, or peasants.

any enormity, he should be deprived of his order and dignity, in order to his receiving condign punishment. From this rude transcript of his laws we may be able to form a judgment of the character of this monarch; and to add some features to his portrait, which have been omitted by our predecessors*.

HAROLD, surnamed Harefoot; A. D. 1036.

Canute had, the year before his death, placed his son Hardicnute on the throne of Denmark, and his son Swein on that of Norway; but as the succession to the crown of England was left undetermined, it was contested by several competitors; so that when the English prelates and nobility met for the election of a sovereign, there appeared no less than three parties in the council; one of which was for Hardicnute, as a descendent from a more honourable mother; another for Harold, as being the elder brother; and a third for Ethelred's two sons, at that time in Normandy. However, the Danes settled in London, &c. declared for Harold, and the dispute was amicably adjusted by a synod convened for that purpose at Oxford. His character was so little known, or his virtues so few, that it would be endless to attempt a representation of them. We find nothing in his reign adapted to the purpose of this history, and therefore our readers will excuse our giving so concise an account of him.

HARDICNUTE, A. D. 1040.

Hardicnute being at Bruges, with a formidable fleet at the time of Harold's death, the English seemed resolved to anticipate any measures he could take for the acquisition of the crown. But these intentions were soon frustrated; and he ascended the throne, contrary

* See Rider's Hist. vol. II. p. 116, and Rapin's Hist. vol. I. p. 148.

to the general satisfaction of the nation. Some of his first actions after his coronation shew him to have been a man of strong passions and keen resentment, and the consequent actions of his reign such as deserved censure rather than praise. He was certainly of an indolent temper, fond of indulging to ease and luxury; he kept a sumptuous table, and oppressed his subjects by many unrighteous impositions. If he had any virtue to compensate for his vices, it was that of filial duty towards his mother; however, he did not wear the crown long, for he died suddenly at a wedding, and it is said through his intemperance.

EDWARD *the Confessor*, A. D. 1042.

The English had suffered so much from the Danes, during the reign of some late kings, that there was a general insurrection, and they intended to drive all the Danes out of the kingdom; but at length a council was held at Gillingham for the election of a king; and Earl Godwin, a person of great influence, remembering his promise to Edward, took him along with him incog. to the meeting. After a long harrangue which the Earl made in favour of the prince, he raised him in the midst of the assembly, saying at the same time, "Behold your King." The assembly being staggered at so unexpected an event, after a short pause, they agreed to elect Edward for their sovereign; and, to give sanction to their choice, Earl Godwin was the first who did him homage.

Edward, being thus settled upon his throne, could not help shewing the fondness he had contracted for the Norman customs; during his exile he invited over several of that nation, and behaved towards these foreigners with a partiality that gave great disgust to the English nobility: he even carried his regard to such a height as was both impolitic and unjust; the most important fortresses, and the greatest posts in the

kingdom, were conferred on the Normans; and the see of Canterbury being vacant, it was filled by one Rodbert a monk; he soon possessed Edward with a high opinion of his capacity and integrity, and engrossed his confidence. Godwin finding the ear of the King possessed by a foreigner, was apprehensive that his master might be led to such measures as were inconsistent with the good of the kingdom; he therefore endeavoured, but in vain, to remove the prelate from the place he held in the King's esteem; but the King was not a little exasperated at the conduct of Godwin. The Irish taking advantage of the unsettled state of the nation, meditated a descent; which was attended with some dreadful consequences. At length a council was convened, and Godwin and his sons, who had fled to Ireland, and promoted the animosity of the Irish, were nevertheless acquitted of every crime laid to their charge, reinstated in their honours and preferments, and restored to the King's favour. Many other quarrels and contests took place in this King's reign, which being foreign to my design I shall omit. The King at length, worn out with years, and unable to perform the vow which he had made of going a pilgrimage to Rome, obtained the Pope's dispensation, on condition of his building the abbey of Westminster. This noble structure, which still goes by the same name, was originally the temple of Apollo, and was by King Seburt turned into a Christian church; during the devastations of the Danes, it was destroyed and laid in ruins, till Edward rebuilt it, for the reason already assigned. A general council of the nation was called to confirm the King's charter, who exempted it from all episcopal jurisdiction, and granted it the privilege of a sanctuary. The dedication of this sacred edifice engrossed all Edward's thoughts, and the officiousness he shewed on that occasion very probably threw him into the fever, which was the occasion of his death. The monks gave him the
glorious

glorious titles of Saint and Confessor; but it would have been with much better grace, if his public or private virtues had ever been so conspicuous as to deserve them. The tranquillity of his reign was certainly remarkable, if we consider the factions which subsisted among his nobles; some have represented him as void of all passion, and attribute much to that evenness and serenity of temper; but they should rather have said he was void of all the social affections; his treatment of his wife and mother would justify such a charge, nay they even extort it. His chastity, which the monks have applauded so highly as to found his merits of being canonized thereupon, was it not owing to natural frigidity, is such a violation of the marriage-vow as ought to transmit eternal infamy on his memory*. Though honoured with the title of saint, and ranked by the flattery of superstition among the martyrs, his irascibility and inexorable resentment were shewn so flagrantly in the affair of Eustace, and in his antipathy to Godwin's family, that it would be a stretch of equity to deem him inculpable. The numerous miracles he is said to perform, deserve to be ranked among the legendary accounts of papal heroes; nor do the pretended cures of the scrophulous humour, called the *King's evil*, by touching, which this King pretended to, in imitation of those of France, deserve more credit.

* Voltaire observes on this occasion, that one of the great faults, or great misfortunes of this King, was his having no children by his wife, daughter to one of the most powerful noblemen of his kingdom: he hated his wife as well as his own mother, and for reasons of state had them both removed from court. However the barrenness of the marriage-bed proved the occasion of his canonization, for it was pretended that he had made a vow of chastity; a rash vow surely, for a married man, and highly absurd for a King, who stood in need of an heir to his dominions; but by this vow, real or pretended, he forged new chains for his country." See Smollet's elegant translation of Voltaire, vol. I. p. 268.

As his laws were looked upon by future Kings as the standard of their conduct and administration, and made one of the articles of the coronation, it will not be improper to give a short sketch of them. All causes in which the church was concerned were to have the preference to any others, and every person who was a tenant to the church was obliged to bring his action in the ecclesiastical court. The clergy were likewise exempted from the civil jurisdiction; the privilege of sanctuaries were confirmed, and no fugitive was allowed to be taken from thence, unless by the bishop and his officers: every offence against the peace of the church was left to the cognization of the bishop of the diocese in which it was committed, and the offender was obliged to give security, that he would make satisfaction to God, the King, and the church, within forty days, and in case he absconded was to be outlawed; the payment of Rome Scot, and of small tithe, he strictly enjoined, and if refused, it was levied by the King's justice, because it was the King's alms *; protection from arrests on certain days, and in certain districts, besides those which were granted a person under the King's own hand, were now confirmed. If any one was murdered, inquest was to be made after the criminal, in the village or town where the body was found; in case the murderer was discovered, he was to be delivered up to justice; in case he could not be immediately found, a month and a day was allowed for that purpose; and in case he was not found by that time, the town was obliged to pay forty-six marks, and if unable to pay that sum, the fine was to be levied on the hundred, and the money was to be kept sealed up for one year; and in case the mur-

* Tyrrel judiciously remarks, that we may from hence observe how much the Popish writers are mistaken, who will needs make these Peter-pence to have been a tribute from the Kings of England to the Pope.

derer was not discovered, six marks were to be paid to the relations of the deceased, and the other forty were to go to the King. Those statutes which more particularly concern the office and prerogative of the King, are compiled with great judgment. In describing the office of a King, the statute informs us he is the vicerent of the supreme King, and is appointed to govern and defend this earthly kingdom, and the people of the Lord, and above all things should reverence his holy church, and discourage all evil doers, which unless he do, he forfeits his title and dignity. The King had a prerogative to pardon life and loss of member, on condition that the malefactor made the best satisfaction he could to the persons injured. Every act of extortion and oppression seemed peculiarly to demand this monarch's notice; he remitted the tax of Danegelt, and could not endure the collecting of taxations by excisemen; nor were usurers tolerated at that time in England.

This is a summary of the laws which Edward the Confessor collected from those which had been enacted by former Kings, and afterwards enforced by William the Conqueror, of which we shall treat in its proper place.

HAROLD II. A. D. 1066.

Historians are much divided in their opinion as to the right of Harold to the crown, and the manner of his accession to it. Harold had no legal claim to the crown by any hereditary right, nor, as we find, by the will of Edward. But without entering into the merits of the dispute, Henry de Silgrave relates, that Harold came to Edward as he was lying on his death-bed, desiring him to appoint a successor; that he replied he had already nominated Duke William for his heir; but the Earl and his friends still persisting in this request, the King turning his face to the wall, replied, "When

I am dead, let the English make either the Duke or the Earl King *."

Harold however used his interest with such dexterity, as to get himself crowned, and began his administration with many popular acts of government; he paid great deference to the clergy, without shutting his eyes to the irregularities of that order, severely chastising the guilty, while he bestowed marks of his favour upon the innocent, by confirming their charters and extending their immunities; he took the most effectual measures for the impartial administration of justice, ordered the laws to be revived and reformed, and exemplary punishments to be inflicted on robbers and disturbers of the public peace; and being alarmed with the news of the pretensions of William Duke of Normandy to the crown, he fortified some of his territories and ports.

The Duke of Normandy, though well informed of all these popular transactions of Harold, would not desist from his enterprize; and even sent ambassadors to demand that Harold would relinquish the crown in his favour, and to denounce war in case of refusal. To this peremptory demand Harold replied, that William had no sort of right to the crown of England; for, granting that the late King had disposed of it in his favour, such a disposition (if any such there was) could not take place, inasmuch as it was diametrically opposite to the laws of the kingdom; which restricted Kings from bestowing their crowns according to their own caprice, especially to strangers. With respect to himself, he had been fairly elected by those who had a right to confer the sovereignty; nor could he yield the crown to any other, without betraying the confidence reposed in him by his subjects; finally, he gave him to understand, that he knew how to defend his right

* This author wrote in the time of Edward I. his history is now in manuscript in the Cottonian collection, marked Cleopatra, A12, cited by Ryder.

against any person by whom he should be invaded : an answer, that referred the dispute to the determination of war ; for which both parties prepared with the utmost diligence.

William the Norman accordingly embarked at St. Valery towards the latter end of September, and after a short passage landed at Pevensey in Suffex ; after having refreshed his men, he advanced along the sea-side to Hastings, where he ordered a fort to be built, and published a manifesto. But though he pretended that he came to revenge the death of Alfred, restore the archbishop of Canterbury, assist the English in punishing Harold, who had seized the crown without having any right to it (but made no mention of Edward's will) these reasons appeared so trifling, that no Englishman would enlist under his banner ; however, he forbade his people to ravage the country, or insult the inhabitants, whom he was pleased to term his subjects.

Harold was at York when he received the news of this invasion, and forthwith began his march to London with the troops that had returned from the north ; and whilst he was in London, waiting for some troops that were on their march to join him, and receiving the professions of the nobility in his favour, William sent ambassadors to him with another threatening message, which Harold retorted by another embassy of the same nature. Some proposals were made for the battle being conducted by his brother Gurth. But Harold bravely replied in the negative, and that he would by his personal behaviour convince his subjects he was worthy of the crown they had set upon his head.

The English monarch having assembled all his forces, advanced against the Norman army, and encamped within seven miles of Hastings, where they remained at some little distance from each other ; and the Duke made some overtures, by one of his monks, to refer the dispute to the determination of the Pope, to quit the

kingdom, if he would do him homage for the crown, or decide it by a single combat. To these propositions Harold replied, that he was not so simple as to submit to the arbitration of the Pope, who had already declared himself a party; that he scorned to hold the crown of England dependent on any prince whatsoever, nor would he put his kingdom on the issue of a single combat, in which, though he should obtain the victory, he could reap no solid advantage; he therefore told the messenger, God would next day decide between him and his adversary.

The fatal day being come, the fourteenth of October, both armies appeared in array, each of them consisting of about sixty thousand, both commanded by men of intrepid valour; and several skirmishes happened that day, without any remarkable advantage gained on either side. William perceiving the night approaching, and unwilling to leave the battle undecided, made another desperate effort to dislodge the enemy; and in this attack Harold was shot dead with an arrow that pierced his brain.

Thus fell the brave, but unfortunate prince Harold II. with his sword drawn in defence of English liberty, and was with his brother Gurth and Lewin sent to their mother Githa, and were honourably interred in the abbey at Waltham, which Harold himself had founded.

Some historians have endeavoured to blacken Harold's character, particularly for superseding prince Edgar, who had the greatest right to the throne. The impartial will, perhaps, acknowledge Harold would have been more worthy of the crown, had he been less anxious to obtain it; for while he was a private man, he won the love and esteem of his fellow-subjects: nor could any action of his reign, which was not a year, forfeit that esteem and affection, especially as he had shewn a regard to the British liberties and interest by two battles, which he fought in a short space. By one
of

of them he obtained a signal victory over the Norwegians, and the unhappy issue of the last was never attributed to his want of courage or conduct. In fine, he was as far, perhaps as the nature and perplexity of his affairs permitted, well disposed with respect to religion, always liberal to the church, and the friend of the clergy: but in the social and relative virtues few exceeded him; he was humane, mild, affable, and generous, such as made his character amiable, as a husband, a parent, and a friend.

Thus ended the Anglo-Saxons sovereignty in England; which Hengist, first King of Kent, began above 600 years before *.

As the *laws* and *constitution* of Great Britain owe their origin to the principal transactions and revolutions of the Saxon heptarchy, &c. the following review of the most interesting periods relative hereto may not be unacceptable to the reader.

When the Picts and Scots had jointly invaded the Britons, who had not spirit to stand up in their own defence, but applied for assistance to the Saxons, who had rendered themselves a formidable people, and took the Britons under their protection, only to gratify their ambition and increase their power and interest; the Saxons invaded Gaul, and established the kingdom of France in 420; after which they came over to Britain, and founded the kingdom of England in 445.

When the English and French came from Germany to people Britain and Gaul, they transplanted with them the moderate sway and liberty of the Germans. They were at this time Pagans, but they were soon converted to christianity, and established that excellent government, which, under several improvements, has been conveyed down to the present age: but they met with some difficulties in forming their settlements, nor could they find any footing, without first clearing their way, and driving the Britons up by themselves into a

* Rapin's Hist. vol. I. p. 167.

corner of the island, where they continued till the year 1212, before they were incorporated with England.

The Saxon form of government was rather aristocratical than monarchical; and they were distinguished into the three ranks of noblemen, freemen, and slaves. Hengist established the kingdom of Kent in 455; and the heptarchy, after some confusion, was formed in 582. These seven kingdoms were considered as one grand state or confederacy; and the command of their armies was given to one prince, chosen out of the rest, on whom some historians have peculiarly bestowed the title of monarch, as having the precedence and some superiority over the others. The Saxon revolution was entire, as far as it extended: they introduced their language with their government; and these together with their customs have descended to their posterity, increased by other engraftments on the original stock. Their *Wittenagemot* was like our parliament, of which it is the source, where they deliberated upon the common affairs of the seven kingdoms; and every kingdom was subject to the resolutions of the general assembly. But it is hard to trace how regularly they moved as to civil affairs, how closely they followed their country-customs, or where they innovated or varied from their German forms and policy. Some footsteps are however discoverable, which have remained to posterity; as the divisions of the country into hundreds; the appointing of sheriffs, and electing annual magistrates by the people; as also the jurisdiction and power of life and death by juries. The whole fabric of this government was solid and magnificent, equally conducive to the honour of the prince, and the security of the subjects: but it is in England only that this antient generous manly government of Europe survives, and continues in its original perfection.

After the formation of the heptarchy, the monarchs of the different kingdoms, each in their turn, aspired at the government of the whole, which occasioned

sioned several wars among the Saxons, who freely shed their bloods, but carefully preserved their liberties. It is remarkable, that the Saxons who settled in Britain acknowledged an hereditary right in the female line; while those who settled in France, abolished it there by the Salique law: but Pharamond subdued Gaul by conquest, and Hengist planted himself in Britain by policy.

The kingdom of the West Saxons was the most considerable among the heptarchy, and was founded by Cerdic in 495. Sexburgha, an excellent princess, governed this kingdom in 672; and Ina began his reign in 690, who published a body of laws, intitled, *West Saxon Lege*, or the laws of West Saxons, whereby he distinguished himself as the first Saxon prince, who regularly summoned a great council or parliament, to enact laws for the better government of his kingdom; for none of their Kings had the power of making laws, without the consent of the general assembly of the nation, composed of the chief nobility. It then consisted of nine articles, and served for the foundation of the laws published in the next century by Alfred. His successor, Sigebert, shewed himself a tyrant; and he was dethroned by his subjects, who were a free people; while the Saxon heptarchy was soon after dissolved, and the English monarchy founded by Egbert.

The great Egbert was of the blood royal of the line of Cerdic; but the crown was granted to him by the election of the people, who, in the language of the best historian, William of Malmesbury, commanded him to reign in the year 800. He found the Saxon strength was degenerated, and their common liberty endangered by the potency of Charlemagne, who had caused himself to be crowned Emperor of the West. But in 829, Egbert became the sole monarch of all the heptarchy, and was crowned King of Britain by the con-

* Rapin, vol. I. p. 175.

sent of both clergy and laity, assembled in a general council at Winchester; after which all the Saxon kingdoms were ordered to pass under the common name of England; and it is observable, that Egbert was not only the father of the English monarchy, but also the august ancestor in the female line of the illustrious house of Hanover.

About this time the Danes and Normans became terrible to England and France; nor were their depredations abated, till they made settlements in both countries: indeed they were another swarm of the old northern hive, and were only a remoter branch of the Saxons. The Danes were formidable at sea, and the naval glory of the Saxons had subsided; but Alfred revived it in 882, and Edgar compleated it in 959; which for many years preserved the liberty of England. Alfred was justly called the father of the English constitution; but he could not prevent the Danes from settling in his dominions, while he was forming the origin of those laws which have preserved the glory of England, and the liberties of Englishmen; besides, he founded, or at least greatly augmented, the university of Oxford, and the sciences flourished under his protection.

The successors of Alfred bravely opposed the incursions of the Danes till the reign of Ethelred II. who gave his enemies an opportunity of rendering themselves more formidable than ever; and notwithstanding the bravery of his successor Edmund Ironside, the Danes succeeded in their attempts; for on his death Canute became the first Danish King of England in 1016.

The Danish conqueror governed England like a Saxon monarch: the Danes, in a course of two hundred years, had intermarried with the English families, and were so much incorporated as to become one people. The Saxon laws were confirmed, and the Danes submitted to them. But the two succeeding monarchs behaved

haved like tyrants, which renewed the English spirit, and recovered the liberty of England; for the Saxon line was restored in 1041, in the person of Edward the Confessor, who reduced the West Saxon, Mercian and Danish laws into one body, which are still in force as the common law of the land.

Harold II. was an usurper, but was deprived both of his crown and life by an invader. This was William the Conqueror, who defeated Harold in 1066, and ascended the throne which he claimed by the testament of Edward the Confessor, without any mention of conquest, as he was conscious that the English were tenacious of their liberty.

The Normans very probably had the same original with the Danes, and established themselves under Rollo, in 876, in that part of France to which he gave the name of Normandy. A potent kingdom was now enslaved by a small dukedom; for, after the battle of Hastings, the English thought no more of striving for their liberties, because the Conqueror accepted the crown on the pretence of election, instead of asserting his right by conquest; he swore to observe the ancient laws of the kingdom, promised to protect the liberties of the people; but he soon attempted to make England a land of slavery, while the English possessions became the property of Normans, and a new race of people spread themselves over the nations. William introduced the feudal law, and some Norman customs, which he engrafted on those of the Saxons. The introduction of military tenures was a violent blow upon English liberty, and all public acts were made in the Norman tongue; so that England seemed as if she was going to be deprived of every thing precious and valuable. But the union of the Norman and Saxon lines under Henry I. promised better days to England; for this prince, in 1100, confirmed his coronation-oath by his charter, which confined the royal authority within its ancient bounds, and guarded

guarded the subjects from arbitrary power; besides, he married the Princess Matilda, the niece of Edgar Atheling, who was the immediate heir of the line of Cerdic, whereby the Saxons and Normans considered themselves only as one united body of Englishmen.

The conquest is indeed a great epocha in the civil history of our country, but none at all in the history of literature, the same darkness continued in the nation, and seems for a time to have rather increased. William the Conqueror was wholly employed in establishing his authority in his newly acquired dominions; with which view he endeavoured to abolish the English laws, and changed the methods of proceeding in the courts of judicature. He was also extremely solicitous to bring in the general use of the Norman, upon the ruins of the Saxon tongue; this however he could not effect; the consequences of which attempt was, that both languages degenerated from their original state, and became in some measure mixed with each other.

The Saxon *Wettenagemot* was turned into the Norman parliament, and arbitrary power was bound by legal right. Stephen was elected King, on condition of restoring the kingdom to its liberties, abolishing the forest laws, and receiving those of Edward the Confessor; but the ambition of the clergy, and the power of the barons, were too great for the prerogative of the King, and England became a prey to the fury of civil wars. When King John obtained the crown, he was informed by Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, "That he ascended the throne by election, and not by hereditary succession; to the end that he might always remember, that those who gave him the crown, had likewise the power to take it away." All the Kings from William the Conqueror swore to the strict observance of the laws, though that oath was observed by none. John wanted to render himself absolute; and his people wanted as much to preserve their liberty: he levied several oppressive taxes; the
Pope

Pope absolved his subjects from their oath of allegiance, and the King paid a shameful submission to the papal nuncio; the barons entered into a confederacy to preserve the constitution, and formally demanded the re-establishment of the laws of Edward the Confessor, with the removal of the charter of Henry I. The King swore he would never grant his subjects such liberties, as would make himself a slave; but the barons took to their arms, and compelled the monarch to meet them in Runemead, or the mead of Council, between Staines and Windsor; where, on the fifth of June 1215, they obtained the sacred charter of their liberties called Magna Charta, as also the charter of the liberties of the forest.

The charters are the foundation of the English liberties, and the bulwark of the British constitution. Some princes have imprudently attempted to break this sacred barrier; but they found the spirit of the people above such an innovation, and they suffered for their temerity. However, the bill of rights, made in consequence of the revolution, is declaratory of those liberties to which Englishmen are entitled, and which God grant may never be violated.

With regard to the state of religion just before the conquest; although at this time many corruptions had crept into the church, and divine worship began to be clogged with superstitious ceremonies; yet it appears that the British church, in some material points, had not conformed to the errors of the Romish see.

For, first, both clergy and laity were required to exercise themselves in reading the sacred scriptures, singing psalms, &c. The bishops and teachers were recommended to the study of the Old Testament, according to the original Hebrew, and the New according to the oriental Greek. And though we find prayers for the dead, yet they were not in the nature of propitiation for their sins, or to procure relaxation from their torments, but were only an honourable commemoration

moration of their memories, and a sacrifice of thanksgiving for their salvation. Purgatory was not then in the sense in which it is at present received; and although they pretended visions and revelations on which to found purgatory, it was held to be destitute of the authority of scripture *." And Bede likewise relates, that the communion was received under both kinds. Cuthbert himself, a little before his decease, received the communion of the Lord's body and blood; and though the word mass was frequent in this age, yet it was not known to be offered as a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead.

There were nevertheless such a prevalence of many of the Popish principles and ceremonies, that the more serious and discerning among the English began to be greatly alarmed, especially as it was become a custom at this time in the Roman Catholic countries to impose the belief of the Catholic faith, and a conformity to their ceremonies, under the sanction of penal laws or ecclesiastical censure.

Some who were zealous for a reformation in France about this time, exposed themselves to great difficulty and hazard. Among these Berengarius, who was archdeacon of Angers in 1059, distinguished himself by inveighing against the real presence, who preached and propagated what he believed to be the truth, in opposition to the worship of saints and images, and other favourite doctrines of the church of Rome, was banished. That province, and many of his adherents, were obliged to desist from public worship, according to what they thought their duty; but as yet any other attempts to a reformation were unsuccessful, through the overgrown power of the Romish church. See Dupin, Cent. XI.

* Fuller's Church History, who cites Bede Eccles. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 5. History of the Church of Great Britain; p. 37.

About this time the antient sect of the Albigenſes, or Waldenſes, were animated with freſh vigour, to ſtand up for the truth. Theſe owe their rights to Peter Waldenſ, in the province of Languedoc, in the time of Pope Sylveſter, in the fourth century. Their diſcriminating tenets were, the belief of one God, or of the unity of God; baptiſm of adult believers, by dipping, faſting and abſtinence, as thoſe of Aſiatics, mentioned by Origen*. But oppoſing the doctrine of the Romiſh church, and the corrupt manners of the eccleſiaſtics, notwithſtanding their piety, drew on them ſuch perſecutions as ended in their deſtruction†.

Mr. Gerrard Brandt gives much the ſame account. He ſays, the doctrine of the Waldenſes appears to have agreed in almoſt every point, with the opinion of thoſe who, ſince the time of Luther, have declared againſt the abuſes and errors of the Romiſh church‡. Some of them likewiſe rejected infant-baptiſm || and oaths, or, as ſome think, raſh oaths only §, and all force upon conſcience; their notion being, that no man ſhould be compelled by the ſword, but won by the force of argument. The antiquity of the doctrine of the Waldenſes is acknowledged even by their greateſt enemies, in whoſe writings, among the ſlanders and contumelies which are caſt upon them, there are glorious teſtimonies of their regular life, unwearied diligence in ſearching out the truth, and fervent zeal in promoting the ſame ¶.

In England, many impoſitions on the rights of conſcience, reſpecting doctrines and ceremonies, had been rather attempted than eſtabliſhed, which created uneaſy apprehenſions in the minds of ſome ſerious and diſcerning Chriſtians, which in after times were oppoſed with Chriſtian fortitude; as will appear from the ſubſequent part of this Hiſtory.

* Contra Celfus, lib. v. Danvers's Hiſtory of the Waldenſes.

† Æneas Sylvius's Hiſtory of Bohemia, cap. xxxv.

‡ Poplin. Hiſt. Franc. Ed. 1581.

|| Vign. p. 408. Madg. Cent. xii. Col. 833, &c.

§ Cat. Feſt. 558. Vign. p. 377. ¶ Brandt Hiſt. p. 12.

A TABLE of **KINGS and QUEENS of GREAT BRITAIN,** from 445 to 1764.

N. B. For many Years before this Period there was a confused
Succession of petty Princes, after the Romans had left Britain.

KINGS OF BRITAIN.

Vortigern	—	445	Ambrosius	—	465
Vortimer	—	454	Prince Arthur	—	508

The Kingdom subdivided into seven Kingdoms, *viz.*

I. KINGS OF KENT.

Hengist	—	455	Lothair	—	673
Escus	—	488	Edrick	—	685
Offa	—	512	Withred	—	686
Hermanric	—	534	Ethelbert and Edbert	—	725
Ethelbert	—	568	Aldric	—	760
Edbald	—	616	Edbert filed Pren	—	794
Ercembert	—	640	Cudred	—	978
Egbert	—	664			

II. Of the SOUTH SAXONS,

including SUSSEX and SURRY.

Ella	—	491	Adelwalch	—	548
Cissa	—	514	Anthun	—	588

III. Of the EAST SAXONS,

including ESSEX, MIDDLESEX and HARTFORDSHIRE.

Offa	—	512	Sibbi and Sigeri	—	665
Erchinwin	—	527	Sibbi alone	—	683
Hermanric	—	534	Suefrid	—	694
Sledda	—	587	Sigchard	—	595
Sebert	—	598	Offa and Withred	—	700
Saxred, Seward and Sigebert	—	616	Ceolred	—	709
Sigebert alone	—	624	Snithred	—	746
Sigebert II.	—	653	Sigered	—	799
Surthelm	—	660			

IV.

IV. Kings of the SAXON HEPTARCHY in SOUTH BRITAIN.

Viz. NORFOLK, SUFFOLK, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, BEDFORDSHIRE.

EAST ANGLIA.

Uffa	_____	575	Egrick Annas	_____	644
Titilus	_____	578	Adelwald	_____	655
Ridowald	_____	599	Aldulph	_____	664
Erpwald	_____	624	Alfwold	_____	683
Sigebert I.	_____	636	Beorna and Ethelbert	_____	749

V. MERCIA In the Midst.

Cridda	_____	582	Ethelbald	_____	752
Wibba	_____	595	Offa	_____	757
Redowald	_____	595	Egfrid, three Months. Cenulph	_____	
Cearlus	_____	616	or Renulph	_____	796
Penda	_____	625	Kenelm and Ceodulf	_____	819
Ofwy	_____	657	Bernulf	_____	821
Wolpher	_____	659	Ludican	_____	825
Ethelred	_____	675	Witglaph	_____	825
Cenred	_____	709	Egbert	_____	825
Ceolred	_____	715			

VI. NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ida	_____	547	Athalaric	_____	586
Adda	_____	559	Athelfrid	_____	593
Glappa	_____	566	Edwin	_____	617
Fridulph	_____	570	Efrick, and Anfrid	_____	633
Theodoric	_____	579	Ofwald	_____	634

Divided into two Parts, viz.

BERNICA, including NORTHUMBERLAND, EDINBURGH, FRITH.

DEIRA, including YORK, DURHAM, WESTMORLAND and CUMBERLAND.

BERNICA.					
Ofwy	_____	643	Ofulph	_____	758
Adelwalt (Deira)	_____	652	Adelwald	_____	759
Egfrid	_____	670	Alered	_____	765
Alchfrid (Deira)	_____	662	Ethelred	_____	774
Alchfrid recalled	_____		Alfwald II.	_____	779
Ofred	_____	705	Afred	_____	789
Cenred	_____	716	Ethelred in 790 restored	_____	
Ofic	_____	718	Ofbald and Ardulph	_____	796
Ceolulph	_____	739	Ardulph	_____	801
Turns Monk in	_____	736	Arfwald II.	_____	808
Edbert	_____	737	Andred	_____	810

VII. Kings of WESSEX or WEST SAXONS.

Cædic	_____	519	Sexburga	_____	672
Kenrick	_____	534	Adelwalch	_____	648
Ceaulin	_____	560	Cenſus	_____	672
He conquers Suffex	_____	591	Eſcwin and Centwin	—	675
Ceobric	_____	592	Ceadwalla	_____	686
Ceolulph	_____	598	Ina	_____	688
Cinigiſil and Quicetus	—	611	Adelard	_____	727
Cinigiſil alone	_____	636	Cudred	_____	740
Cenowalch	_____	643			

EGBERT unites the SAXON HEPTARCHY, under the Name of
ENGLAND, A. D. 828.

KINGS OF ENGLAND.

Egbert	_____	828	Edward II.	_____	975
Ethelwolf	_____	838	Ethelred II.	_____	978
Ethelbald	_____	857	Edmund II. furnamed	}	1016
Ethelbert	_____	860	Ironſide		
Ethelred	_____	866	Canute the Great King	}	1017
Alfred furnamed the Great	_____	872	of Denmark		
Edward I.	_____	900	Harold furnamed Harefoot	_____	1036
Athelſtan	_____	925	Canute II. or Hardiknute	_____	1040
Edmund I.	_____	940	Edward III. furnamed	}	1041
Eldred or Edred	—	948	the Confefſor		
Edwy	_____	955	Harold, 9 Months	_____	1066
Edgar	_____	959	William the Conqueror	_____	1066

KINGS OF SCOTLAND.

Fergus	_____	404	Eugenius VII.	—	703
Eugenius I.	_____	420	Merdacus	_____	710
Dengardus	—	452	Ethnus	_____	730
Conſtantine	—	457	Eugenius VIII.	_____	761
Congallus	_____	479	Fergus II.	_____	764
Goran	—	501	Solvathius	_____	767
Eugenius II.	_____	535	Achaius	_____	787
Eugeuius III.	—	551	Congallus III.	_____	819
Congallus II.	_____	558	Dongallus	_____	824
Kinathal	_____	569	Alpinus	_____	831
Aidan	_____	570	Kenneth	—	834
Kenneth	_____	604	Donald V.	—	854
Eugenius IV.	—	605	Conſtantine II.	_____	858
Ferchard	—	622	Ethus	_____	874
Donald	_____	636	Gregory	_____	875
Ferchard II.	_____	650	Donald VI.	_____	892
Malduinus	_____	669	Conſtantine III.	_____	903
Eugenius V.	_____	688	Malcolm I.	_____	942
Eugenius VI.	—	692	Indulphus	_____	958
Amberkelethus	_____	790	Duffas	_____	968
					Cullen

Cullen	_____	972	Alexander III.	—	1249
Kenneth III.	_____	977	Interregnum from 1286 to the		
Constantine IV. styled }			time of Robert		
the Bald	— }	994	Robert I.	—	1306
Grinus	_____	995	David II.	_____	1329
Malcolm II.	—	1004	Robert II.	—	1370
Duncan	_____	1034	Robert III.	—	1390
Macbeth	_____	1040	James I.	—	1406
Malcolm III. furnished }			James II.	_____	1437
Canmore	— }	1058	James III.	—	1460
Donald VII. furnished }			James IV.	_____	1488
Bane	— }	1093	James V.	—	1513
Duncan II. and Donald- }			Mary	_____	1542
gair	— }	1094	James VI.	_____	1567
Edgar	—	1097	Who reigned 36 years, and in		
Alexander I.	—	1107	the 45th of Elizabeth		
David	—	1124	James I. of England, unites both		
Malcolm IV.	—	1153	the kingdoms under the name		
William	—	1165	of Great Britain.		1603
Alexander II.	—	1215			

The **KINGS** and **QUEENS** of **ENGLAND**, since the Conquest.

William I.	_____	1066	Henry I.	_____	1100
William II.	—	1087	Stephen	_____	1135

The **SAXON** Line restored.

Henry II.	—	1154	Edward I.	_____	1272
Richard I.	_____	1189	Edward II.	_____	1307
John	_____	1199	Edward III.	_____	1326
Henry III.	—	1216	Richard II.	_____	1377

The Line of **LANCASTER**.

Henry IV.	_____	1399	Henry VI.	_____	1422
Henry V.	_____	1413			

The **YORK** Line.

Edward IV.	_____	1461	Richard III.	_____	1483
Edward V.	_____	1483			

The **FAMILIES** United.

Henry VII.	_____	1485	Queen Mary	—	1553
Henry VIII.	_____	1509	Queen Elizabeth	—	1558
Edward VI.	_____	1547			

The **TWO** Kingdoms United.

James I.	—	1603	Queen Anne	—	1702
Charles I.	—	1625	George I.	—	1714
Charles II.	—	1648	George II.	—	1727
James II.	—	1684	George III. whom God pre-		
William and Mary		1689	serve,	_____	1760



C H A P. IV.

*Of the State of KNOWLEDGE and RELIGION in GREAT
BRITAIN, from the Reign of WILLIAM the CON-
QUEROR, 1066, to the Reign of RICHARD I.*

WILLIAM, surnamed the Conqueror, A. D. 1066.

IF we impartially consider the Duke of Normandy's attempt upon England, we shall find it difficult to determine, whether the ground of his pretensions, the boldness of his undertaking, or the success attending it, is most surprising: the consequence was a dreadful anarchy of perplexity and consternation, from different motives of interest, terror, and despair, which this destruction occasioned in London. The Conqueror considered that the loss of a battle might astonish, but not terrify the English; that they might have considerable resources of men and arms, before he could be much reinforced from Normandy. However, he concluded to begin his march for London, in three divisions; ordering his men, if attacked, to destroy the country with fire and sword. As he approached the capital in this manner, the terrors of the people waxed stronger and stronger, and the clergy used all their industry and insinuation to dissuade them from making resistance. But, in opposition to these persuasions, Morcar and Edwin, the two brothers of Harold, took an opportunity to sally out with their party from London, thinking to find him unprepared: but they were so warmly received, that they retired with great precipitation; and
even

even this attempt was attended with no small disadvantage, for it occasioned his setting fire to some parts of the suburbs of London; so that at this time the nobles and prelates assembled at London, would no longer delay to seize the only opportunity they might have, to plead the merit of a voluntary submission. They accordingly went forth, attended by the magistrates of London, and meeting the Duke at the head of his troops, made a solemn tender of the crown: he received them with great courtesy, and, after having taken time to deliberate upon the proposal, accepted the offer they had made, and assured them they would have no cause to repent of their choice *.

The Norman having thus acknowledged the power of election in the people of England, in deigning to receive the crown as a present, was immediately proclaimed King, and appointed the day for his coronation at London; and pursuant to his own desire the ceremony was performed by Aldred archbishop of York; who upon that occasion addressed himself to the English, assembled in great numbers, asked if they chose William Duke of Normandy for their King? and was answered in the affirmative, with loud acclamations. The bishop of Constance having put the same question to the Normans, and received the like reply, Aldred set the crown on his head; and then the Norman took the accustomed oath, importing that he would protect the church and its ministers, govern his people with equity, enact just laws, and cause them to be punctually observed †.

The first act of sovereignty he exercised after his coronation, was the seizure of Harold's treasure, which he found amassed at Winchester, part of which he distributed among the principal officers of his army, part was given to churches and monasteries; and a large share sent to the Pope, as a mark of his grati-

* Smollet, vol. I. p. 391. † Malmesbury.

tude for the countenance of that pontiff, to whom he in great measure owed the success of his late enterprize.

He granted a new charter to the city of London, confirming the privileges which the citizens enjoyed in the reign of Edward the Confessor. He preserved the Saxon laws and constitution, and put the laws in force against robbers, who then infested the country; and in order to add to the safety of his kingdom, he built two castles, one at Chester, and the other at Stafford, which he strengthened with garrisons.

The first act of his arbitrary power was manifested, in renewing the odious tax of *danegelt*, a quit-rent out of all the lands of England, wardships, reliefs, fines, &c. *. This occasioned a general discontent through the kingdom, and made some insurrections, which William very severely punished. After all the sources of rebellion were quashed, William endeavoured to introduce the laws, customs, and language of the Normans; loading his countrymen with benefits, and oppressing the nobles and barons of this realm. Nor was his oppressions confined to the nobility, but extended also to the clergy, whose charters he violated without scruple; ordained that the church-lands should be subject to military service, and furnish a certain number of horsemen: besides, he lodged great part of his army in monasteries. Where he could get any information of any riches hid or deposited in them, he ordered them to be searched, and seized upon every thing that was valuable. He likewise deposed Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, and several other prelates, and promoted to their dignity strangers from different climes, and some of his Norman chaplains, and seized on many of the abbey-lands. By these means he strengthened his interest, increased his revenues, and made himself the terror of the country, where they were too weak to re-

* This was one shilling on every hide of land, that is, an hundred acres; but every manurer of land paid if he had but a tenth part. Rapin, vol. I. b. v. p. 141.

list. Many of the English nobility fled to Scotland. This so exasperated William, that he picked a quarrel with Malcolm King of Scotland, A. D. 1072, who was too well prepared to be immediately intimidated; both parties prepared for war, and both armies ready for action, but not eager to begin the attack. William found them well entrenched, and knew Malcolm had been trained to arms, so that both parties inclined to an accommodation; and on Malcolm's sending an embassy to William, a peace was made on the following terms: "That the boundaries of the two nations should be settled; that he should swear fealty to him, or do him homage; and that William should restore the English exiles to their estates.

After William had made things a little easy at home, he retired to Normandy, when a considerable revolution happened in the church. At the death of Alexander there was no small dissention in the conclave, which flamed so high, that two Popes were elected, viz. Hildebrand and Guibert, who were each of them acknowledged by different powers. However, the former, named Gregory VII. was recognized by the Kings of France and England; but Hildebrand was no sooner settled in the chair, than he discovered himself to be a person of inordinate ambition and extraordinary insolence: determined to make William pay for the countenance and favour he had shewn him while he was cardinal, soon after his return to England, he sent one of his nuncios to him with letters, wherein he insisted on his doing homage to him for the kingdom of England, as a fief of the Roman see, and demanded the arrears of Rome Scot, which had not been paid for some years.

The answer which William made to this insolent demand, was worthy of the King of England. He refused to do fealty to the Pope, and strengthened his refusal, by appealing to the conduct of his ancestors, who

who had never left him a precedent. The following is a translation of the original *.

“ To the most excellent Gregory, pastor of the holy church, William, by the grace of God, King of England, and Duke of Normandy, sendeth, greeting. Hubert, your nuncio, coming unto me in your behalf, advised me to do fealty to you and your successors, and to take more care in making good the payments of money, which my predecessors used to remit to the church of Rome. One of these I have consented to, but have refused the other. As for fealty, it is what I never have done, nor will do; because I neither obliged myself to perform it by any promise made by myself, nor do I find my predecessors ever performed it to yours. As for the money, it was collected in a very bad manner, for almost three years, during my absence in France. But now I am, by God's mercy, returned to my kingdom, I have sent by the nuncio above-mentioned, what is already collected: as for the remainder, it shall be sent, when convenient, by the legate of Lanfranc, our trusty archbishop. We beg your prayers for ourselves, and the welfare of our kingdom, having born a great regard for your predecessors, and being desirous of approving our affections and obedience to you above all others.”

And although this politic Prince was thus complimentarily courteous to the Pope, yet he retained the ancient custom of investing bishops and abbots, by delivering them a ring, and a staff, whereby, without more ado, they were put into plenary possession of the power and the profits of their benefice; for he always declared he would keep the pastoral staves in his own hands. Nor would the King suffer any in his dominions to acknowledge the bishop of Rome for apostolical without his command, or to receive the Pope's letters, except they were first shewn unto him; nor did the King permit the bishops to pass sentence of excommuni-

* Selden, p. 1631.

tion against any of his barons or officers, although it was for the commission of the most heinous crimes, except leave was first had and obtained from the King. However, the King did grant to the bishops the jurisdiction in religious matters, and the grant of tithes, as well small as great.

The King likewise made an act for the uniformity of the liturgy, which was to be regulated by that then in use at Salisbury, composed by Osmond bishop of that see.

About this time the King had contests with the Welch and the Scotch; he levied a numerous army, and marched with resolution to chastise and reduce them to obedience. The peace being settled, he turned his mind to putting his finances in a condition to supply all his necessities; and in this no prince, perhaps, had ever greater penetration or invention than he discovered in the various means made use of for this end, especially as he stuck at nothing he judged subservient to this point, on which his safety so much depended. The Saxons were already fleeced to gratify his avarice, the Normans were grown opulent by their spoils; and as they had for a considerable time enjoyed the benefit of his government, he thought it but just they should pay their share towards its support; and that he might know what impositions they could bear, he ordered an estimate to be taken of all the lands in his kingdom. Commissioners were appointed, who had a right to make inquest, upon oath, upon or near the premisses, of the extent and value of the arable, meadow, and pasture land, every individual had. This survey was no less than six years in making, and was contained in two books. This register was sometimes called the roll of Winchester, because it was deposited there. It was also named Domboc, which name was not given it because it decides any dubious matters, but because it is illegal to depart or appeal from its decisions. It is now called **DOMESDAY-BOOK**.

This

This scheme succeeded so well, that persons of all ranks were included, and the value of their estates pretty well known, so as to receive a proportionable taxation. The next year, which was 1084, was remarkable for nothing so much as the oppressive tax of six shillings upon every hide of land throughout his kingdom. Whether avarice or policy might have given rise for this oppression, is very uncertain. He applied part of it for building the Tower of London. The disaffection and jealousies, it occasioned, are much better conceived than described. It was very natural for him to fear the resentment of his subjects, if any opportunity presented. An invasion of the Danes indeed soon after happened; but the English did not care to join them, and it was soon suppressed: however, it pleased God at length to put a stop to his tyrannical reign; for he went to Normandy, A. D. 1087, and died, occasioned by a fall from his horse.

From the transactions of William's reign, he appears to have been a prince of great courage, capacity, and ambition, politic, cruel, vindictive and rapacious, stern and haughty in his deportment, reserved and jealous in his disposition; but though sudden and impetuous in his enterprises, he was cool and indefatigable in time of danger and difficulty. A late ingenious author calls him a *glorious tyrant*; an epithet I shall leave my readers to judge of its propriety.

WILLIAM II. surnamed Rufus, A. D. 1087.

The Conqueror was succeeded by William, his second son, called Rufus, from his ruddy complexion, who owed his elevation to that dignity, to Langfranc, archbishop of Canterbury. Some opposition was indeed agitated, and the nation seemed to be in some commotion; but Langfranc wisely advised him to conciliate the affections of the English: and he accordingly amused them with magnificent promises to ease them
of

of their burthensome tolls and taxes, and allow them the free liberty of hunting. Cajoled by these professions, which were void of all sincerity, the English adhered to his interest; and the Londoners raised an army of 30,000 men for his service. But it was not long after, when William began to show so much of his father's disposition, as even to procure a new survey of many of the lands in England, and laid heavier taxes upon them. By this and other methods, which discovered his rapacious disposition, great contests ensued both in Scotland and Wales. A treaty was however brought about, and peace concluded, with Malcolm of Scotland: but William by his insolence and perfidy soon broke the treaty; and when Malcolm sent ambassadors, demanding the performance of the articles in the late treaty, he desired the Scottish King to come in person, to his court at Gloucester, where he should have justice done him. Accordingly he came, where he was treated very imperiously, and was told he must submit the affair to the decision of the English peers. Malcolm rejecting this, returned to his own country; and, glowing with indignation, forthwith assembled an army, and invaded Northumberland, which he ravaged as far as Alnwick; when he had so far reduced the garison, that the governor demanded a capitulation, on pretence of presenting him the keys on the point of his spear, thrust his weapon into his eye, and killed him on the spot.

But this is contradicted by Aderic. Vital. Eccles. Hist. l. 8. p. 701. who says that Malcolm was surprized under the security of a treaty, and unexpectedly attacked by Molbray*.

Rufus being freed from a powerful enemy, in the person of Malcolm, he turned his thoughts to invading his brother Robert's dominions in Normandy; which neither was for the credit nor the advantage of William.

* Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. p. 265.

When

About this time Langfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, dying, William the King seized the profits of the see into his own hands, and kept the church vacant for some years, as likewise the bishoprics of Winchester and Durham, and appropriated the profits of thirteen abbeys to his own use; by which means he brought immense treasure into his exchequer, and all benefices which he parted with was upon the present payment of large sums*.

About the year A. D. 1088 began the holy war, and Robert Duke of Normandy, to fit himself for such an important expedition, sold his dukedom for ten thousand marks, to his brother William. To pay this money, King Rufus laid a grievous tax over all the realm; extorting it with such severity, that the monks were obliged to sell their church-plate, and even their chalices; and when the clergy desired to be eased of their burdens, he bid them search for their coffins of gold and silver, and dead mens bones.

At this time there was a contention at Rome between two Popes, Urban and Clement III. Rufus took part with Clement; but Anselm acknowledged Urban, and desired of the King leave to fetch his pall off Urban: all the rest of the bishops were against him; mean while the King had sent two messengers to the Pope, for the pall; who returned with the Pope's legate, with the pall, to be given to Anselm: this legate so far persuaded the King, that he acknowledged Urban for Pope. But upon his delivering Anselm the archbishop's pall, thereby making void the investiture he received from King William, and obliging him afterward to acknowledge his right of investiture, it gave great displeasure to the King; whereupon he expelled Anselm his kingdom, confiscated the lands of the archbishopric, and declared that his bishops did and should hold their sees of him, independent of the Pope. Anselm compromised this affair

* History of the Church of Great Britain, p. 39.

by the intervention of friends : upon which he returned to England ; but was so zealous for maintaining and propagating the opinion of the Pope's sole right of investiture, that he was again obliged to fly from the kingdom.

William the Conqueror having rendered the new Forest in Hants, by his devastation of towns and churches, a wilderness for men, and a paradise for deer ; King Rufus went there on a party of pleasure, when the King was slain by the glance of an arrow, shot by Sir Walter Tirrell.

Thus fell William, after the reign of thirteen years, during which he oppressed his people in every form of tyranny and insult. He was equally void of learning, principles and humanity ; haughty, passionate, profligate and ungrateful ; a scoffer at religion, a scourge to the clergy, vain-glorious, rapacious and dissolute, and an inveterate enemy to the English, though he owed his crown to their valour and fidelity ; when the Normans attempted to deprive him of the crown, scarce possessed of one single virtue, to compensate for his vices ; and, in the words of the celebrated Mr. Pope, DAMNED TO EVERLASTING FAME.

HENRY I. *surnamed* BEAUCLERK, A. D. 1100.

Henry, the youngest son of the Conqueror (*surnamed* Beaucerk, which signifies a good scholar) succeeded to the crown, though, had his brother been in England at the time of Rufus's death, the English seemed more biased in his favour, and he would probably have acceded to the crown. However, circumstances favoured Henry's advancement to the throne, though not without some tumultuous opposition at the election, and he was immediately proclaimed King. And as the people had too much reason during the two last reigns, to think that a King is very apt to disregard his coronation-oath, Henry, for the farther satisfaction

tisfaction of his subjects, granted the same day a charter, confirming their privileges, and redressing some grievances under which they laboured. By this deed, which was authenticated in the most solemn manner, and transcribed into a great number of copies, dispersed all over the kingdom, he established the churches in possession of all their immunities, and exempted them from all the hardships they had sustained from the tyranny of Rufus; especially that of being kept vacant for the King's use, and afterwards put up to public sale, without any regard to merit or capacity. He abolished the excessive fines which used to be exacted from the heirs of noblemen for the livery of their lands; permitted the natives in general to dispose of their children in marriage, according to their own pleasure, without paying for a licence from the crown. He suppressed the duty of moneyage, paid once in three years, in consideration of the King's preserving the coins unaltered. He remitted all fines, mulcts, and debts in the exchequer, arising from vexatious prosecutions; allowed the barons to bequeath their personal estates; exempted the lands possessed by the military tenants of the crown from gelds, talliages and benevolences; restored the laws of Edward III. relative to murders, thefts, &c. and forgave all rapine and depredation committed to that time, on condition the offenders would make immediate restitution.

In pursuance of the same laudable scheme of reformation and redress, he expelled from court all the ministers and instruments of his brother's debauchery and arbitrary power, and published a severe edict against delinquents and adulterers; he abolished the odious curfew, requiring every man at the ring of a bell at eight o'clock to put out his fire.

As Henry had been greatly obliged to the citizens of London in his acquisition of the crown, he gratified them with another charter of very ample privileges; and, in order to crown the satisfaction of the people, he recalled

called Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, who was become exceeding popular in England through the influence of the monks. The prelate accepted the invitation with transport, and soon after landed at Dover; but the King was greatly disappointed when he found that Anselm refused to do him homage, adhering to the canons of the council of Bari, which forbade ecclesiastics to receive investitures from the laity, or to pay them homage on any account; and the conditions of their living together in a good understanding were, that the king should relinquish the prerogative of investing bishops and abbots, and pay an implicit obedience to the Pope. Henry, though shocked at the insolent proposals of this arrogant priest, who wanted to curtail his authority, was forced to temporize. For about this time his brother Robert asserts his claim to the English crown, and if Anselm's interest were to have been thrown in that scale, it might preponderate on that side; and even, notwithstanding, the king's moderation, when Robert his brother made a descent at Portsmouth, he found the people's mind fluctuating, and the King was obliged to depend, in some measure, on the eloquence and interest of Anselm, to preserve peace and loyalty to his majesty; so that at length affairs were compromised. Henry now proceeded with rigour against many of the nobles who had promoted the invasion by his brother: some were banished, their estates seized, &c. while he rewarded others for their zealous attachment to his royal person.

But all the nobles in the land were more easily managed than the archbishop of Canterbury, who was a true monk and bigot to the church of Rome. For his design was to accomplish two projects: the first was to establish celibacy among ecclesiastics; (Anselm called a council at Westminster, where first he excommunicated all married priests, though half the clergy at that time were married;) and the second, to hinder bishops and abbots from receiving the investiture of

their benefices from the King. The Pope had given his orders for insisting upon the execution of the canons against lay investiture; nevertheless, the King refused to part with his prerogative, and Anselm refused to consecrate the bishops whom Henry had appointed. This produced a quarrel, which at length Anselm resolved to go and lay before Pope Pascal II. A. D. 1103; and he was accompanied by some bishops, who had quitted their benefices, rather than acknowledge the King's supremacy; and the King sent two ambassadors at the same time to defend his cause. But notwithstanding their remonstrance the Pope remained inflexible, and would not make any concessions, though he wrote a letter to the King in mild terms, telling him, "He should be glad to oblige him in any thing that was consistent with justice; that he had no design of encroaching upon his prerogative; but the granting the right of investiture to a layman was not in his power, as it was an essential property of church-government."

The King was not well pleased with the Pope's answer, and ordered his ambassadors to acquaint Anselm, that he did not desire to see him in England, unless he was resolved to conform to the example of his predecessors.

Whilst Henry was abroad in Normandy, he received an expostulatory letter from the Pope, by the hand of Anselm, and the King allowed him to return to England.

When Anselm arrived here, he was received very joyfully; and repairing to Canterbury with the pall in a silver box, the archbishop went bare-footed to meet him, attended by all the monks of St. Augustine and Christ-church.

A legate was likewise sent by Pope Henorius II. to go to England and Scotland in the quality of legate *à latere*, and on his arrival was received by the archbishop of Canterbury with all the honours due to his character. The legate being commissioned to enquire
into

into the diffentions between the archbishop of York and the Scotch prelates, who refused to acknowledge his primacy, went to Roxburgh, where he held a conference with David, King of Scotland, on that subject. On his return, he presided at a general convocation of the prelates and clergy, where, to shew his authority, he was seated on an eminence above the seats of the archbishops and temporal lords, who attended the council, which was very disagreeable to many of the English, and the council ended with no important advantages.

We might enlarge in the history of the reign of Henry I. by a variety of transactions of a civil nature; but as that is not my province, shall conclude with only observing, that he died of a fever, A. D. 1135, and shall sum up his character in a few words. He was too fond of foreigners, too vindictive to his enemies, too sensible to be an enthusiast, too cautious to be surpris'd, too valiant to be conquer'd, too good to deserve the calumnies cast on him by the monks, and too bad to be generally applauded.

STEPHEN, A. D. 1135.

Stephen ascending the throne, after being elected, rather by a cabal of prelates and noblemen, than by a general consent of the nation, resolv'd to secure the favour of the nation by some extraordinary concessions; and therefore over and above his promise of ruling with equity and moderation, he solemnly swore that he would not retain vacant sees and benefices in his hands, but fill them immediately with persons canonically elected; that he would not disturb the clergy or laity in the enjoyment of their woods; that he would not sue any person for hunting in the royal forest; that he would never exact the tax of danegelt. The English were so credulous as to believe he would pay a greater regard to it, than was evident from his future conduct. However, partly through his own

treachery and misconduct, his whole reign was a scene of war and contest, both abroad and at home. We meet with very few transactions relative to learning or religion. There were however many religious foundations built and endowed in the troublesome reign of King Stephen; as the monastery of St. Mary de Pratis, founded by Robert, Earl of Leicester; the hospital of St. Catherine, near London, founded by Maud, wife of King Stephen; and St. Stephen's chapel at Westminster, founded by himself; as also the Cistercian monastery at Feversham, with an hospital near the West-gate at York, &c.

He died after a short illness in 1154. His character is that of humane and generous: he seems to have been possessed of many great qualities; and, had he lived in happier times, he might probably have been reckoned one of the most illustrious monarchs that ever filled the English throne.

HENRY II. A. D. 1154.

Henry came to the crown with an indisputable title. He was a prince, wise, valiant, and generally fortunate: Soon after his accession to the throne, he chose a privy-council of clergy and temporality, and refined the common laws. He parcelled England into six divisions, and appointed three judges to every circuit. He erased many of the castles to the ground, as he found they were held by persons in a kind of independence of the crown, and derogatory to the authority of it. These regulations seem first and principally to engross his attention, but he afterwards found others to demand his concern. The gross impositions of the Pope highly threatened the diminution of his royal prerogatives; so that he disclaimed the Pope's authority, refused to pay Peter-pence, and interdicted all appeals to Rome. But he only, or chiefly, regarded his temporal prerogatives; for had not they been invaded

vaded by the prelates, under the direction of the Pope, they might have continued their influence in the church in all spiritual affairs. However, the King was not sufficiently upon his guard in the choice of his favourites.

Thomas Becket, doctor of canon law, was, by the King, made chancellor of England; and four years after he was, by the King, made archbishop of Canterbury; and this, in process of time, proved highly prejudicial to his majesty's authority. One of the first matters of dispute was, that the King having commanded that justice should be impartially executed upon all men in his court, Becket insisted on the clergy being exempt from the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, and judged in the ecclesiastical court. This incensed the King against him. To adjust matters of importance, the King called a parliament at Clarendon, to confirm the antient laws and customs; to which Becket and the rest of the bishops consented, and subscribed to them; but Becket afterwards recanting, renounced the same.

The same year, A. D. 1160, the King required that the law should be put in execution for some crimes committed by the clergy, which the archbishop would not permit; and, without the King's knowledge, determined to repair to Rome and lay the affair before the Pope. And this was a matter of debate for some years.

Matthew Paris recites a variety of letters between this Pope and the King, and between the Pope and the King of France. By the mediation of the latter, Becket had leave to return to England; however the King still retained his temporal authority.

Upon Becker's return to England, he excommunicated several Bishops. The next year he excommunicated lord Sackville, who had been appointed by the King vicar of the church of Canterbury, as he had derogated,

derogated, as he called it, from the rights of the church to please the King.

The King being then in Normandy, complained greatly, to some of his domestics, of the insolent behaviour of Becket, whom he had raised from abject circumstances to such dignity, and yet by such unparalleled ingratitude became the continual disturber of his government. Authors vary greatly in their conjectures, and history affords us nothing certain with respect to the motives of the persons who came over to assassinate Becket. Whether they were incited to it by the King, and received any promises of reward for so rash an action; or whether they were animated by principle only, and a regard to the tranquillity of the nation; be this as it will, William de Tracy, Reginald Fitzurse, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, mutually engaged to revenge the King's quarrel. They withdrew from court, and taking shipping at different ports, arrived in England, and met at the castle of Saltwode, within six miles of Canterbury. The next day they went to Canterbury, and advanced to Becket's apartment, where they warmly expostulated with him about the rashness and insolence of his conduct in his station as chancellor, and more especially as archbishop; which making no impression upon him, it is said, they retired to put on their armour, and soon returned to execute the assassination, which they did with many circumstances of cruelty.

Collier says *, " That, upon the news of the archbishop's death, the King and the people were extremely troubled; though it may be easily conjectured to proceed from different motives. The King was apprehensive that the archbishop's murder would occasion reflection and dishonour to his highness; and so, in fact, it did soon. The King of France wrote to his holiness, in which he made no scruple to charge him as culpable in that act; and intimated, that the Pope should

* Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. p. 375.

draw St. Peter's sword against King Henry, and even to think of some new and exemplary punishment for a crime in which the universal church was concerned, This was likewise followed with another from the Earl of Blois, and another from the archbishop of Sens, in which he moves for an interdict upon his dominions.

King Henry protested his innocence, and sent an embassy to Rome, upon his arrival in England, about that time, to compromise matters ; and either from a consciousness of his fault, or motives of policy, agreed to purchase his absolution upon very severe terms. The Pope enjoined him to suffer appeals from England to Rome ; to quit his right and claim to investitures ; to keep 200 men in arms for the holy war ; and to pay forty thousand marks of silver, and five thousand of gold. Some add, that he submitted to strip himself naked at Canterbury, and to be lashed by divers monks, some of whom gave him five, others three stripes. This was in A. D. 1170, and the Pope canonized Becket for a saint.

During this reign, a considerable number of Germans came over to England, to attempt a reformation from some of the gross errors of Popery. Authors differ as to their number. The sentiments and character of these men but agree in this, that they were severely treated, by branding them with hot irons, and by other methods of cruelty ; some were even put to death, which they bore with great fortitude.

The reign of Henry abounds with many acts which redound to his honour, notwithstanding his foibles, which derogate from it. He was educated with high notions of the kingly prerogative, for which he manifested the most inviolable attachment ; and he guarded the liberties of his subjects by many excellent laws and regulations. So that, upon the whole, he is ranked among the most powerful and illustrious of the English monarchs.

N. B. As the subjects of the **INTRODUCTION** are various, and of an interesting nature, I find it will take more than two numbers: for which reason I have begun it in the last half-sheet of this, and shall finish it in the tenth number, which completes **VOL. I.**

The next volume will begin with the reign of **RICHARD I.** In which, and the subsequent reigns to the time of the Reformation, the exorbitant claims of the Romish Church, and the prevailing errors of that religion, amply evince the necessity of a reformation; which, with the progress of it, abroad and at home, will come under consideration.

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